

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE DEAD WIVES OF THE PROPHET. — HE NEVER WAS KNOWN TO SHED A TEAR.

The Discarded Favorite.—The Story of Emmeline Free.—A Stupendous Humbug.—A “Free” Opinion of Mormonism.—Amelia comes upon the Scene.—How Brigham Insulted Emmeline Free.—Brigham is Ashamed of his Cowardice.—I tell him a little of my Mind.—Joseph A. expresses his Opinion.—Apologizes for his Father.—Death of Emmeline Free.—The Story of Clara Chase.—The Prophet’s Maniac Wife.—Ellen Rockwood, and the Cause of her Neglect.—A Wife who was visited once in Six Months.—Margaret Alley.—How the Prophet treated his Dead Wife.—He steals her Children’s Property.—How he Scandalized another Wife, and sent her Home.—He “Never shed a tear at a Wife’s Death.”

**F**OR many years the favored wife, the one who ruled over her husband, and reigned in the family, was Emmeline Free. The Prophet married her when she



A LITTLE CONVERSATION WITH BRIGHAM

was quite young, having first to overrule the objections of her parents, who, although Mormons, were much opposed to polygamy. She was a willing convert, for she had been taught that Brigham Young was a near approach to divinity, and she had unbounded reverence for him; and the child—for she was

#### 507 A WOMAN’S OPINION OF MORMONISM.

little more than that—was flattered and delighted at the Prophet’s wish to have her for a wife.

Those who knew her at the time of her marriage

say that she was an extremely lovely girl, and I can well believe it, for she was a very prepossessing woman. She was tall and graceful, with brown eyes, and fair hair that waved naturally. Her face was pleasant in expression and very bright, until it became saddened by her husband’s desertion of her for Amelia.

I used to see a great deal of her. I visited at her house when I was a girl, was intimate with her children, and saw more of her while I was a member of the family than of any other. In virtue, I suppose, of her former position, Brigham never neglected her as he did some of his other wives, and she always retained a certain influence over him. She was not afraid of him, and had long since ceased to regard him with awe. I once entered the Prophet’s office when she was there; she was talking quite earnestly, and did not stop on my entrance; she concluded her conversation by saying—

“Well, I’ve lost faith in the whole thing. I consider Mormonism a stupendous humbug, and all the people who have been made to believe in it, terrible dupes. I’ve no patience with it any longer.”

Her husband—“our” husband at the time—laughed as though he considered it a good joke, and turned the conversation, making it general, so that it included me. I think he did not wish such “heresy” talked before his young wives, lest it should engender discontent in their hearts. He needn’t have been troubled about me, for the mischief was already done. I had begun to think things out for myself, and I had arrived very much at the same conclusion that Emmeline had, although I had not dared to express my opinion to any one.

Once during my married life with him, Brigham invited Emmeline and myself to go with him to Brigham City,

#### 508 HOW BRIGHAM DECEIVED EMMELINE.

where he was to hold a conference meeting. There was a large party, and we went with the usual pomp which attends such occasions. I enjoyed it better than I did most of the excursions I took with him, because I was very fond of Emmeline, and preferred to have her rather than any of the other wives. I think she felt the same way toward me because she knew that I was her champion; moreover, she was quite aware of my feeling toward “our” husband, and the difficulty he had had in inducing me to become his wife, and she did not consider me in any degree her rival. We arrived one afternoon, and everything was most amicable. He was unremitting in his attentions to Emmeline, and I was very happy to see her happy, and enjoyed myself very much with some of the younger members of the family. In the evening he told Emmeline that he should expect her to accompany him to church the next day.

The next morning he arose very early, and drove away in a buggy alone; in a little while he returned with Amelia, breakfasted with her, and started away again. In the meantime Emmeline, who had not heard of Amelia's arrival, was preparing to accompany her husband to church; she dressed with unusual care, and made herself look very pretty. She waited impatiently, but he did not come. I knew of the arrival, and when I went upstairs and saw Emmeline waiting with her bonnet on, I asked her if she was not going to start soon, as it was getting late.

"I am waiting for Brother Young," said she.

"He has gone long ago," said I. "I thought you knew it."

"Gone without me? Why that's funny, when he made such a point of my going with him."

"Yes; but that was before Amelia came."

Emmeline's face changed expression in a moment.

"She's here?"

#### 509 A DISAPPOINTED WIFE.

"Yes; she came this morning. Brother Young went to the depot to meet her."

"Then he must have known she was coming. Can I never go anywhere without having her thrust in my face?"



I thought for once I should be spared the infliction."

She took off her things, and I laid mine aside, too, and in place of going to the grand conference meeting and listening to "our" husband's eloquence, we had a conference of our own, and that morning I came nearer to Emmeline's heart than I ever had before. She talked to me unreservedly and unrestrainedly, and told me events in her history that were full of thrilling interest, but which were

given me in confidence, and which I cannot give again to the world. I think the dead eyes would haunt me forever, and the dead lips would move in ghostly reproach if I betrayed her even now. Dear, loving heart, that beat

#### 510 "I THINK BRIGHAM FELT ASHAMED."

so wearily through all the years, I hope you are meeting your reward now, cradled in the infinite love of a Divine Father! Tears dimmed my eyes and moistened my cheeks, when I read, a few days since, of your death; but they were tears of joy at your glad release, and not such bitter tears of indignant sorrow as I shed that morning over the story of your wrongs.

I think Brigham felt ashamed and a little conscience-stricken. I know he was decidedly uncomfortable when he met his insulted wife again. He tried every means in his power to propitiate her, and I never saw him assume so abject a manner before. Amelia returned that day, and he told Emmeline that he did not know of her intention to come down, that he had not expected her at all. He also told her that the reason he paid so much attention to Amelia was, that he might, "save her soul."

Emmeline did not believe him when he told her he did not expect Amelia, and she told him so very plainly. He then came to me, and said—

"Emmeline's real mad at me—isn't she?"

"Yes," said I, "but no more than your deserve. I think it's too bad in you to take her for a pleasure trip, and then get Amelia here at the first stopping-place."

"I didn't get her here. I didn't know she was coming."

"Well all I can say is, it looked like it; you certainly went to the station to meet her."

"I just went down to see who had come, that's all. Seems to me you're taking Emmeline's part pretty strong—ain't you?"

"Yes, I am, for I think you've treated her badly."

"Guess a little of the mad is on your own account—isn't it?"

"Not a particle of it. Amelia doesn't interfere with me."

He laughed and went out. Presently Joe made his appearance, probably sent by his father.

"So Emmeline is cutting up rough about Amelia's coming, is she?" he asked of me.

#### 511 "THE MANIAC."

"Not at all; she's indignant, but that's no more than is to be expected; but as for 'cutting up rough' as you term it, she's too much of a lady to do that."

“Well, it’s too bad to have this fuss; but I suppose I’m to blame for the whole affair. I was coming down, and I didn’t want to come alone, so I asked Mary, Alice, and Amelia to come along too. I never thought of Emmeline when I asked Amelia.”

“Mary” was Joseph A.’s first wife, Alice was his sister, and the two were very intimate with Amelia. This story sounded very well, but I didn’t believe it, neither did Emmeline, when she heard it. It was too evident the Joe had been sent by his father to endeavor to make peace. Be that as it may, Amelia did not put in an appearance again during the trip.

Emmeline had been an invalid for years, and I was not surprised to learn of her death. When I heard of it, I felt as I always do when I hear of the death of any Mormon woman. I thank God to think their misery is over. She had eight children, Marinda, Ella, Louise—nicknamed “Punk” by her father—Hyrum, Lorenzo, Alonzo, Ruth, and Della.

Marinda is the only wife of Walter Conrad. Ella and Louise are both married out of polygamy, one to Nelson Empy, the other to James Harris. Hyrum, so far, contents himself with one wife.

Clara Chase is usually spoken of as “the maniac.” She died mad several years since, leaving a large family of children. She married him when quite young, but she never was a firm believer in Polygamy, indeed, she distrusted the principles of it from the very beginning, and had many struggles of conscience before she could make up her mind to marry the Prophet, and she suffered perpetual remorse ever after. She had a peculiar face, low-browed and dark, and it was rarely lighted up by any pleasurable motive. There was on it an expression of fixed melancholy that seldom varied or changed.

#### 512 “YOU HAVE SENT ME TO HELL!”

Knowing her aversion to the system, and her distrust of it and of him, Brigham at first treated her with a very great deal of consideration. He gave her an elegant room, nicely furnished, and placed in it a large portrait of himself. He tried to make her surroundings as cheery as possible, and so wean her from the melancholy into which she had fallen. As long as he devoted himself personally to her, she was comparatively cheerful and content, and tried her best to be happy; but when he neglected her she was almost desperate, and wandered about in a half-dazed fashion, weeping and moaning, and calling on God to forgive her.

Just before her last child was born, her fits of remorse were terrible. She endured untold agonies, and accused herself of having committed the unpardonable sin, and she knew salvation was denied. Those who were about her at the time, say that it was heart-rending to hear her.

Just at this time, when her husband should have given her the most love and most tender of sympathy, he was, more than ever, harsh, cruel, and unfeeling, and treated her with such marked coldness and contempt, that she went insane, and raved constantly. “I am going to hell! I am going to hell!” was her agonized cry. “Brigham has caused it; he has cursed me forever. Don’t any of you go into polygamy; mind what I say; don’t do it. It will curse you, and damn your souls eternally.” When she saw her husband, she cursed him as the cause of her downfall. “I have committed the unpardonable sin; you have made me do it. O curse you! Curse you! You have sent me to hell, and I am going soon.” To her children, as they gathered round her, she cried, “O, don’t follow my example! Don’t go into polygamy, unless you wish to be cursed! Don’t let my children do as I have done,” she would say to those about her. No help could avail her. Brigham and his counselors “laid hands” on her. A doctor was called, but all to no purpose. She died in the midst

#### 513 “NO HELP COULD AVAIL HER.”

of her ravings. Her children’s names were Mary, Martha, Maria, Willard, and Phoebe. Mary is the wife of William Dougall. Phoebe is the only wife of Walter Batie. Willard, the only son, had just graduated with honors at West Point.

Ellen Rockwood was one of the least regarded of the wives. She was a little woman, in delicate health, and very fond of fancy-work. She was the daughter of the warden of the penitentiary, one of Brigham’s faithful officers. Her influence with the Prophet was very small, as she had no children, and was regarded as of little consequence on that account. Still, I do not think that Brigham ever positively ill-treated her. He used to call on her very ceremoniously once in six months.

Margaret Alley, who was never much of a favorite, died in 1853. She was morbid in temperament, and, before her death, became very melancholy, owing to the neglect of her husband. She had two children, Eva and Mahonri-Morianchamer.

One of Brigham’s “proxy” wives was Jemima Angell, a relative of Mary Ann Angell, his first living and legal wife. Her husband had died, leaving her with three children; and when she came to Nauvoo, Brigham found them. He wanted a servant, and she wanted salvation. The discoveries were simultaneous, and she was very soon persuaded to be sealed to him. All the while they were in Nauvoo, “Aunt Mima” worked untiringly, and on the arrival at Salt Lake he gave her a lot of land for her children. One of her sons built a house on it, but she did not occupy it, as she could not be spared from Brigham’s kitchen. She worked until she became broken down in mind and body, and then Brigham sent her to her daughter, who was mar-

ried to a poor man, and had a large family of children, yet was willing to take her mother, and do the best he could by her. She died very soon, and the daughter's husband telegraphed the news of the death to Brigham; also the

#### 514 THE END OF "AUNT MIMA!"

time they should arrive with the body for burial. They lived fifty miles from Salt Lake, in the Weber Valley, and, as they could not obtain a coffin there, they put the body into a box to convey it to her husband, who, when they arrived, was not at home; at least, he could not be found; and what is called the "Eagle Gate," or the entrance to the Prophet's premises, was closed against them. They could not gain admittance for hours; and, in the mean time, all that was left of "Aunt Mima" lay in a pine box in an open wagon, with every avenue to her husband's house closed against her.

Finally, even Brigham grew ashamed, and allowed himself to be found; and when they asked him where they should take her, said, very carelessly, "O, I suppose she might as well go to her sisters', upon the hill!" she was taken there, and decently buried, though Brigham grumbled about the expense.

In the mean time, the land that he had given her had increased in value, and when the children went to take possession of it, he refused to let them have it, although it would have been a God-send to poor Mrs. Frazier, with her large family of children. But his avarice is so inordinate that no amount of suffering stands in the way of his self-enrichment. Once he is bent on obtaining a piece of property, he does not care whom he defrauds to obtain it.

At the time he was sealed to Lucy Biglow, he had her sister sealed at the same time. She was very pretty, and he had seemed very fond of her. But suddenly his fondness cooled, and he treated her in the most shameful manner. He heaped every indignity upon her, and finally sent her back to her parents, saying she had been untrue to him. She protested her innocence; but all in vain. He would not, or professed not, to believe her, and talked harshly and cruelly to her when she attempted to vindicate herself.

Her parents were very much grieved, and were tossed about with conflicting doubts. They wanted to believe their

#### 515 THE DISGRACED WIFE.

daughter, and, in their hearts, I believe they did; yet they dared not dispute Brigham. They took the poor, heartbroken girl home, and she fairly pined to death under the disgrace that her husband tried to attach to her name.

Besides those wives whom I have already men-

tioned, there have been very many more who have been married to him "for eternity." I should be sorry even to



guess their numbers. There was also one wife, who, during "Reformation" times, was said to have "run away to California" [a thousand miles away through an uninhabited country, and before the era of railways in the West]; but it was whispered

#### 516 HE NEVER SHED A TEAR!

among wicked Gentiles that really she paid the full penalty of the Endowment-Oaths, and in the Endowment-House, too, her throat being cut from ear to ear, and the other horrible performances gone through, on account of some indiscretion, or want of faith. Of course, I do not vouch for the truth of this statement. I simply give it in common with much else for what it is worth.

I have heard Brigham say, in speaking of the number of wives and children that he had buried, "that he never shed a tear at anyone's death;" and I believe that, if every friend he had in the world lay before him, cold and still and with frozen pulse, he would look on unmoved and indifferent, and never shed a tear, so utterly heartless is he.