



Type: Book Chapter

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## Chapter I

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Source: *Why We Practice Plural Marriage*

Published: Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1884

Pages: 3–22

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**Abstract:** The author discusses some of her motivation in writing this booklet, to "throw more light upon [plural marriage], and to show forth the foolishness an inconsistency of those who hold it up as a 'foul stain that pollutes the very soil where it exists.'" As part of this chapter, she includes a selection of correspondence with a non- Latter-day Saint from Alabama who was intrigued by the teachings of the Church and had reason to believe the Restored Gospel as taught by the "Mormons" to be true, but was reluctant to be baptized.

# WHY WE PRACTICE PLURAL MARRIAGE.

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## CHAPTER I.

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MY purpose in publishing another pamphlet on the subject of plural marriage is to throw more light upon it, and to show forth the foolishness and inconsistency of those who hold it up as a "foul stain that pollutes the very soil where it exists." Those who are striving to convert our children from the faith and principles so plainly set forth in their own Bible, and which were practiced by the old patriarchs, inspired prophets and mouth-pieces of God, whom Christians quote from as His sacred oracles, and yet wish to take away the civil and religious rights of a people whose belief and practice are confirmed by that very book. Those who disfranchise, without trial, every man and woman who has ever been connected with this plural order, (though the women may have been widows for twenty years or more, and have been pardoned by government for their supposed transgressions) and wish to take away our Territorial charter, confiscate our homes and property, compelling wives to testify against their husbands on pain of greater punishment if they refuse, in order that hungry adventurers, who practice all manner of licentiousness but are screened from the laws which they themselves or their own kind administer, may possess themselves of our hard-

earned homes in these mountain fastnesses. In short, those who make our religious faith a pretext for stirring up the public mind against us to accomplish their own selfish ends.

I have received numbers of letters of inquiry from the States, requesting the forwarding of my former pamphlet. I have reason to believe that through my humble labors the spirit of truth, which inspired me to write, has found its way to the hearts of many who have been so accustomed to the extravagant and malicious tales published against us, that a plain, unadulterated truth has become a rarity which sensible people will appreciate. A spirit of inquiry has taken possession of them, who, though they may not accept the gospel, are opposed to the unconstitutional course that is being taken against us by our government. There are also some few who are honest enough to admit the superiority of our marriage system to the prevalent monogamic mode, which has led to the greatest vices and social evils that are daily increasing, and degrading the human family; making both husbands and wives a perpetual prey to the "green-eyed monster," and the more awful torment of a guilty conscience. I believe that my testimony will carry conviction to the hearts of some of the wise and thoughtful, who will look at matters as they are, squarely in the face; who view the wreck that is being made of the great charter of human rights, and of honor and virtue, by the slackness, dishonesty and corruption of men who have violated their official oaths, made a farce of religion and morality, and had their consciences seared as with a hot iron, until now this professedly free and liberal government can condescend to punish the innocent by taking from them their inherent rights, and the privileges guaranteed by the constitution which these "statesmen" have sworn to maintain and defend.

An elderly gentleman, who belonged to no church, and whom I judged to be well-to-do in the world, wrote to the JUVENILE INSTRUCTOR Office for one of my pamphlets. He also expressed a wish to correspond with some lady who had "lived in polygamy and knew all about it by actual experience," his "object being to learn the feelings of the 'Mormon' ladies on that subject."

This letter was forwarded to me. I was little prepared for anything of the kind. It was not so pleasant to think of corresponding with one who was not a believer in our faith. But having entered the field I had no disposition to shirk the task. I therefore replied in behalf of the women who have taken upon them the cross and honored this celestial principle. I assured him that there would be no objection if his motive was honorable, as we desired that the world should know of our faith and doctrines; though few in the various denominations were willing to honorably meet us, but had shown a cowardly spirit by shunning argument and gathering up every vile falsehood to publish against us—making us appear as the most ignorant, degraded and unprincipled beings upon the face of the earth. I used no flattery, but gave him plainly to understand with whom he was dealing. Thinking some portions of this correspondence might prove interesting to my brethren, and sisters, and others, who, like him, are curious to know of our inner life and doctrines, I wrote him, after concluding to publish this pamphlet, asking if he had any objections to my inserting extracts from his letters. Previous to this I had shown them to no one but my husband, to whom, I gave him to understand at the first, I should submit them. He answered that I was at perfect liberty to use them as I pleased, as he had written nothing but what he considered truth.

His first letter was dated Alabama, January 25, 1883.

After assuring me that his object was strictly honorable he commenced by expressing his views concerning the “murderous jealousy and deadly hatred” which he thought “existed less where law and custom tolerated plural marriage, than where such things are not allowed.” He had “thought that if the demon, jealousy, could be done away with, plural marriage would be the greatest blessing to womankind; for if they lived together and felt towards each other as sisters, they could be of great benefit to each other through the journey of life.” He could not believe that “taking a second wife would rob the first wife of any part of the love her husband had for her, any more than the birth of a second child robbed

the first born of the love its parents had for it." "But the common opinion here," said he, "is that if a man loves a second woman any at all, his affection for the first is gone, and the wife would be ready to kill him and her both." He supposed that it was not so bad here, and wished to know the experience of myself and others of my acquaintance; also to know what effect the Edmunds and other oppressive bills in Congress against the "Mormons" would have.

"I think sometimes," said he, "of going to the Mormons; for they express my views more than any people I ever knew anything about, and I think there is more genuine Christianity among them than among any other people. I have read several of their books and papers. But I am afraid this oppression by Congress will destroy them as a people or drive them from the limits of the United States, as they were driven from Nauvoo many years ago. I sympathize with you in your troubles with Congress. Write to me freely and be assured that you are writing to a friend. In my next letter I may tell you some of my personal experience and troubles."

I answered this letter as follows:

"Jealousy is something which the human family have inherited. We are told in the Bible that jealousy was the cause of the first murder committed—when Cain became jealous of his brother Abel. We are all of the earth, earthy, and were born and begotten in sin, and the human family have been degenerating down through all the ages until the greater portion have even sunk, in some things, below the brute creation; and in their corruption have become as a stench in the nostrils of the Almighty. In the beginning we read that God created Adam and Eve and every living thing, male and female, and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. I believe that if the human family had always strictly lived up to the laws of God and nature, and had not transgressed and abused their privileges, there would not have been the same necessity for a plurality of wives in this life, though there are still other important reasons to justify and require its practice. 'Neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord,' says Paul. If

the ancient laws and ordinances had not been changed by man, and every one had filled the measure of his creation as he was commanded to do in the beginning, there would have been husbands and homes for all womankind. She could then have filled her 'proper sphere,' which seems a favorite theme for some men to harp upon, never thinking that through their own wicked and unnatural course thousands of women are denied their privileges and are forced to seek employment outside of home, which 'sphere' they would have been only too glad to have occupied, had such been provided them.

"Polygamy, at different periods, has been practiced as a correcter of evils and a promoter of purity; because of the wickedness and corruption into which the world has sunk; and this is the present condition of all civilized nations. Every sign goes to show that we are nearing the end—the winding up scene which all the ancient prophets have foretold, as well as the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was revealed to the latter that there were thousands of spirits, yet unborn, who were anxiously waiting for the privilege of coming down to take tabernacles of flesh, that their glory might be complete. This, Lucifer and his armies, who were cast out of heaven down upon this planet, have been doing their utmost to prevent. Their greatest punishment is in not having bodies; and their mission is to throw dust in the eyes of the children of men, that they may not see the truths of heaven. It is through Lucifer's wicked schemes that so many thousands of tabernacles have been and are being destroyed, and thereby those choice spirits have been hindered from coming into this state of existence, which event is of the greatest importance to them. But the work of the Almighty is rushing towards its completion, which makes this plural wife system an actual necessity. It was our Father in heaven who commanded that it should be established, and we have nothing to fear for what we have done. It is a controversy between God and Satan. The principle was established by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and all who have entered into it in righteousness, have done so for the purpose of raising a righteous seed; and the object is that we may be restored back to that Eden from whence we

fell. Some may have dragged it in the mire; but the principle remains pure and independent and only the wrong-doer has become degraded.

“The Lord has said He will have a tried people. We are all so differently constituted that what might be a very severe trial to one would be light to another. I believe, however, that He suffers each one to be tried in the way that cuts the keenest. But we know of none who have been tried as He suffered Job to be.

“We might learn much of the ways in which God has dealt with His children by reading in the light and understanding which was enjoyed by the inspired writers of the Old and New Testaments. I will make use of the beautiful parable spoken through the angel to Esdras, which is plain and to the point:

“‘A city is builded, and set upon a broad field, and is full of good things. The entrance thereof is narrow, and set in a dangerous place to fall, like as if there were a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep water, and one only path between them both, even between the fire and the water, so small that there could but one man go there at once. If this city now were given unto a man for an inheritance; if he never shall pass the danger set before it, how shall he receive this inheritance? And I said, It is so, Lord. Then said he unto me, Even so also is Israel’s portion. Because for their sakes I made the world, and when Adam transgressed my statutes, then was decreed that now is done. Then were the entrances of this world made narrow, full of sorrow and travail: they are but few and evil, and full of perils and very painful.’

“If any human beings are to become ‘joint heirs with Jesus Christ,’ who had to sink below all things, surely the Latter-day Saints can have a claim with Him, and must be the ones spoken of by the prophets who were to be hated of all men for righteousness’ sake. We have always been wronged, hated and oppressed from the very day that the angel appeared to Joseph Smith, and long before he had thought of the plural wife system. We came down upon this dark planet to be tried and proven,

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and if we had nought in our natures to overcome, where would be the victory? 'The worst of slaves is he whom passion rules.' The faults and weaknesses which are born in us are the enemies we are to grapple with, and those who have the greatest, and can put them under their feet, are the greatest conquerors and will wear the brightest crowns. It is only the Spirit of God, which follows obedience to His commandments, that has assisted the Latter-day Saints in overcoming and subduing themselves as far as they have, instead of allowing their passions to overcome them, and I assure you that this is the whole secret, and the only thing that makes the difference between us and the unbelieving, or those who persist in fighting against this holy principle.

'If I did not know that my husband was actuated by the purest of motives and by religious principle I could not have fortified myself against that 'demon Jealousy,' and had it not been for a powerful testimony from the Lord, which gave me a knowledge for myself that this principle is of celestial birth, I do not believe that I could have submitted to it for a moment. Therefore I can take no credit to myself, only as far as I rendered obedience to Him. I was afraid of no man, but I feared to rebel against the Almighty, though at times it was like the tearing of my very heart-strings, and it took much prayer and struggling to overcome. Yet through it all I have stood as a pillar by the side of my husband and can say with truth that my soul has been purified and my love has become more exalted. My willing and undivided heart is laid upon the altar, and all my life and talents which the Lord has lent me, I wish to be devoted to this great and glorious cause.

'I have had no cause to doubt my husband's love for me and my children, and he is a very devoted father to all his children. I know by my own experience, and that of my sainted mother's, and also of other first wives, who have acted their part nobly, that they have not only retained the affection of their husbands, but to see such a great sacrifice made by the wife of his bosom has increased his love and exalted her in his eyes. I have had this testimony from different husbands and wives.



“My father had a number of wives, some were old ladies who chose to be sealed to him, but he never lived with them only to support them. Different ones of his wives lived with my mother at various times, and they all loved her and she loved them and they mourned for her when she died as if they had been her own sisters or daughters. He mourned for her and refused to be comforted. Nine months after, he was laid by her side, where his family reared a marble monument to their memory. He died a wealthy man and all were provided with good homes. He having made no will, his wives had a voice in choosing the administrators, and they chose one of my mother’s sons for the first. Everyone of his children were heirs and all received their portion equally. Some of the younger boys—sons of plural wives—looked up to this their elder brother and preferred to work for him to any other man.

“I assure you there is as much delicacy, modesty and refinement among those who live in this plural order as can be found anywhere, and I am acquainted with some model families; one or two I will mention. A young man took two sweet women as his wives, one some time previous to the other. She came from one of the eastern States and is educated and refined, but has been very delicate and has borne no children; the second one is of Norwegian parentage. I am best acquainted with her and know that she is very gifted; being the daughter of a splendid violinist she can play that instrument and also others, and has an excellent voice for singing. She has borne him three or four children. The two women are nearly always seen together. The children love and cling to the first wife more, even, than to their own mother. Another is a well-to-do man, a widower, who married a young lady and soon after wedded another. Both were young and pretty, and are good industrious wives. Each has a large family of children. The wives loved each other from the first and have appeared like twin-sisters, dressing alike when they went out together. They live under one roof, though in different apartments, and are well provided for. They are separated only by a hall. If there has ever been any jealousy, I should say it was on the husband’s

side, on account of their mutual devotion. I could mention others but these will probably suffice.

“Polygamy is not the worst trial in the world, for it has been made honorable among our people, and it is not in the power of man nor of Congress to make it otherwise. I have always felt that I could bear it far better than those practices which are unlawful and wicked in the sight of God. That which would make me feel humiliated and disgraced before my friends and the public, would be much harder to endure.

“Our children are considered as stars in a mother’s crown, and the more there are, if righteous, the more glory they will add to her and their father’s eternal kingdom, for their parents on earth, if they continue righteous, will eventually become as Gods to reign in glory. Nothing but this, and a desire to please our Father in Heaven, could tempt the majority of ‘Mormon’ men, or women either, to take upon themselves the burden and responsibilities of plural marriage.

“My husband was advised by my father to take another wife. He studied my feelings and took one whom he had cause to believe loved me and my children, and would cause me the least trouble. She lived with me in the same house till she had three children, and had it not been for this, and the care of my own little ones, we should never have separated. It was more agreeable to her to remain, as we had lived kindly together. Mr. Whitney has built her a large, comfortable house within a few feet of mine, and has deeded to each of us our homes. Our children have always lived more peaceably than many who have one mother. I am called ‘Aunt’ by them and their mother is called the same by my children. When visited by my relatives from the east, and from California, I have invited her to make their acquaintance. One was the husband of a cousin who passed through here on his way east. He wrote a letter to his wife, telling all about what he had seen; and the other wife and children coming in and out of my house and being at my table. Said he, ‘I have looked at both their faces but can discover no nail marks.’ After the letter was finished he read it to me, which afforded considerable merriment. The next Summer his wife came and

spent nearly a year with me. She saw both sides of the picture. At first she felt quite jealous for me, but finding her sympathies misplaced she soon became just as friendly and sociable with the other branch of our family, although she did not embrace this work."

The answer to this was dated March 1st, 1883, and ran as follows: "Dear Madam: I received your long and well-written letter. It gives me much information about the people of Utah, and I wondered how you could afford to write such letters to a stranger 2,000 miles away, without pay. But I suppose your object is to publish truth. Accept my thanks for your very interesting letter. I have read your book on Plural Marriage and I agree with you upon that subject—not from any special revelation on the subject, but from what I know about the laws of human nature. There is about six per cent. more females than males, and there is not ten per cent. of males that would take more than one wife and there are others who ought not to have any. Besides, many a married man's heart goes hungry. In fifty years there will be more people of our opinion than at this time in the United States.

"Ten years ago I took a widow and her babe one year old. Her husband was killed in the war between the North and South. That woman is living fifteen miles away in another county and owns 100 acres of land in her own name, with stock enough. But when I first knew her she had nothing but her orphan child. She has had no more children. It would not do for me to talk this out loud in this country, for I have a delicate wife who thinks it is a very damning sin to think of another woman. Now you have some knowledge of me and my troubles, and if you can feel sorry for me, pray for me with all your might, for I am trying of late to do what I think is right. I think that I ought to have the other woman, for our love was mutual, and it did not rob my wife of any love I had for her, but it made trouble at home, and I did like Abraham, I sent her away, but gave her more than a bottle of water.

"I have published some articles in defense of your people which called down the vengeance of a Methodist preacher of

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doubtful morals, in an article published in a Methodist paper, about the Morgan Co. Mormons, with many false assertions in it. I will send them so you can see how the Pharisees do over here. I think as little of them as you can. Please let me know in your next how much tax your people have to pay. I have heard they have to pay the tenth of all they make to support the priests. Do your people not fear that plural marriages will be broken up in a few years by such laws and the emigration of other people among you, and the turn of public opinion against it? Law and public opinion are very powerful. From what I know of the Mormons I think they are the best people that there is, but I have thought there might be some superstition among them.

“What do your wisest men think they will do in case the government of the United States proves too hard for you? A mob drove you out of Missouri over forty years ago. It would take a good big mob now, but the government may. Jeff Davis had 400,000 of as good soldiers as the world ever saw, and he could not live in rebellion to the laws. If the government thought you were going to leave the United States it might soften their policy towards you.

“If I could see a man healed of some disease by the laying on of hands, like we read of in the days of Christ, I would want to stay among you. I have seen much hypocrisy among church members in this country and I desire to live among honest people. Three Mormon preachers stayed three days at my house last Spring, and preached once in the neighborhood. I think they were good men, but a mob sent a note to them on the day of preaching, to leave the country. The worst men that we had did this. I would like another letter from you if it don't tax your valuable time too much.”

After receiving this second communication I sincerely wished I had obeyed my first impulse and not taken upon myself such a task. I pondered it over in my mind and laid the matter before the Lord many times, asking Him to give me enough of His spirit that I might view the matter as I should do, and not pass a hasty judgment. I thought of the mission of our beloved Savior. He did not come to “call the righteous, but

sinner to repentance," and when those who are in darkness seek after light, if we can reach out and point to that light and to a higher standard, should we refuse, when the Lord has dealt so mercifully with us? Should we be less merciful to those who may have sinned through ignorance? When they ask for bread should we give them a stone? Those whom the Lord had bidden to the wedding were not worthy, and His servants have gone out as He commanded, into the high ways, to gather together all, as many as they find, "both bad and good," that the wedding may be furnished with guests, and if there are those in that day who have not on the wedding garment, He will cast them out when He makes His appearance, and the whole matter rests with the individual and his God.

My reply was as follows:

"SIR:—Yours of March 1st, has been duly received, in which you have given all necessary explanation pertaining to your domestic relations and troubles; I had suspected as much. You request me to pray for you saying you have been trying of late to do what you think is right. If it is the gospel of eternal life and salvation you desire and are seeking after, I shall take pleasure in giving you all the light I can that pertains to it or to this people called 'Mormons.' I can assure you that the prayers of the Latter-day Saints are continually offered up for the honest-hearted wherever they may be, upon the whole earth. I have prayed for you personally, as you requested me to do. You seem to be familiar with the scriptures and therefore must be acquainted with the laws and commandments. Those laws are contained in this the everlasting gospel which we have accepted. I can testify that those who have once known and understood the laws of God, and then transgressed them, have soon lost all the light they enjoyed. Adultery is considered the next greatest sin to the shedding of innocent blood or consenting thereto, and if transgressors do not speedily repent and sin no more, it is as sure to destroy them as the worm or the insect the tree that it undermines and poisons. Sooner or later they die in the spirit and are left in a far worse condition than if they had never heard this gospel. They

become as dead branches, and for the good of the main tree they have to be severed therefrom. But if they sin through ignorance of these commandments, they have far more hope, and there is more of a chance for them to obtain forgiveness than those who sin after they have once received the glorious light of the gospel. The darkness of such minds is in proportion to the light they have received. 'Of those to whom much is given much is required.'

'We should not seek for signs to convince us of the truth. I refer you to the words of Christ: 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.' 'Verily I say unto you, think not that I have come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword, for I am come to set a man at variance with his father,' etc. And 'a man's foes shall be they of his own household.' 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.' 'I will take two of a house and one of a city,' etc. We have witnessed the fulfillment of these words and predictions in scores of instances.

'As for the government of the United States being 'too hard' for us, we shall leave that to Him who holds all governments in His hands. It is true we are looking for the worst, but we feel safe because we intend to be obedient to the Great Commander, who has decreed these things, and has promised us His protection, and we have never yet known His word to fail. Nothing will ever soften the policy of this nation towards us, though there will be individuals who will favor us, but not the government. But if the honest portion understood the purposes of God as well as do those who have been guided and sustained by Him, they would wish to share our trials and scourgings that they might also be partakers of the blessings which we are enjoying daily, and the greater ones that are laid up for the faithful to be enjoyed after the days of tribulation

are past. The Holy Spirit makes our burdens light, and as for being left to the mercy of this nation, we have no such idea.

“The Lord suffered us to be driven from the United States to carry out His purposes. There was not room enough for the increase and growth of such a great people as we are to become. Besides He had to school and train His people to make of them the right kind of soldiers. But a few years will elapse before His faithful Saints will have the privilege of returning to the lands whence they were driven, Jackson county, Missouri, being the spot where the center Stake of Zion is to be built up, and we look for God to fulfill His own purposes. We are not expecting all this people to remain here, but to continue spreading out until our borders extend to the sea. We shall not fight as did Jeff Davis and the rebellious South, nor shall we rebel in any way against the laws of the United States; for they cannot lawfully interfere with our faith and religion.

“The Lord will sweep the earth of its wicked inhabitants, and you will soon find that there is no safety outside of Zion, and the best thing for you to do is to become Saint enough to trust in the Almighty. There are no fears entertained by those who are strong in the faith. Our prayers have prevailed against our foes, whose wisdom has been taken from them, and these are our sure weapons. We do not look at things as they naturally appear. We expect to go forth conquering and to conquer, and no power upon earth or in hell will be able to hinder or frustrate these plans, in which the Latter-day Saints are but instruments in the hands of the Great Master. As for the Edmunds law we feel to protest against it, but will leave the outcome to Him who stands at the helm. It will not be fifty years before there is a reaction in public feeling concerning the ‘Mormons’ and plural marriage. Those who have ever introduced any new idea or plan of improvement have had to meet opposition. And this being one of the greatest ideas ever advanced naturally brings upon us the greatest opposition.

“Peace reigns in the hearts of all this people who are living their religion. We entertain no fears of prison or the

gallows. We can afford to be charitable for we know what is coming upon the earth. Many of us have drunk deep enough of the cup of sorrow and adversity, to be able to feel for our fellow-creatures. I fervently pray for those who are deceived, for prejudice is great because of the fearful falsehoods that are set afloat by persons who are here in our midst; unscrupulous schemers who take advantage of the peaceable disposition of our people and the wide spread prejudice existing against them, and who know that no other people would patiently submit to such indignities."

I answered his questions about tithing and other matters he had broached before closing this epistle.

His next letter was dated April 6th, 1883.

"MY FRIEND:—I feel that I ought to call you my friend after reading over thirty pages written for my instruction, and learning that you had prayed for me personally. I was glad to hear that so devoted a Christian, as I take you to be, had prayed for me. You say your people class adultery next to murder. I think it wrong, but not so bad as murder. But what is marriage, according to the unwritten law of nature? Is it anything more than a contract or agreement between the parties—agreeing to travel the journey of life together, and do all they can for each other's happiness? That is what I think the law of the land requires—a certain process to make them feel more bound to each other. But in my case I think an honorable man and woman would do all they could for each other, if there was no law. I think plural marriage is right, as I do not find it condemned in the Bible, and the recording of the match or contract in a book, don't amount to much in heaven's courts. I want to do right and live the life of a Christian in its true spirit. I do not think the name is important. I have been considered a skeptic, have seen much corruption in the churches, but since I have read the Book of Mormon and some other books by your people, and seen some of your members, I think if there is any Christian spirit in the world it is among your people, and I would like to be baptized by a good man of your order; but there are none of them in this country and it would not be pleasant to live here and be



known to the world as a Mormon, but I might live a Christian life here without a name.”

He advanced some peculiar ideas about baptism, briefly as follows: He wished me to consult President Taylor, or some other good man authorized to baptize, and get him to perform the ceremony here at an appointed time, and he would immerse himself in water at that same time, and the Elder, he suggested, could ask for the Holy Ghost to be bestowed upon him. He thought that would be accepted as baptism in his case, situated as he was. He wished me to see President Taylor and get his advice on this subject, and others, and desired an early answer, saying that he was interested and wanted to do right.

I wrote again and advised him to send for the book of Doctrine and Covenants, and informed him that I had sent some papers containing sermons by the servants of God, and from their teachings he could gather more light, and that he had better wait till he had read more and investigated this work, before taking any further steps. The ordinance of acting by proxy, I explained, was for those who had died without having the opportunity of hearing and obeying the requirements of the gospel in this life. In conclusion I wrote:

“I may have frightened you out of coming to ‘Mormondom,’ but I have spoken plainly and truthfully. I do not believe in using flattery to induce people to gather to Zion, as the love of the truth should be all that is necessary to do that.

“Do not suppose for a moment that Congress is going to put a stop to the purposes of the Almighty. They might as well try to stop the winds from blowing. Those who cannot afford to take upon themselves the cross or make any sacrifice for the sake of their being with God’s chosen people, and especially to bear their name, are unworthy of His blessings here or hereafter. If you, or anyone else, desires the Holy Spirit to be bestowed upon you, you will have to render strict obedience to His requirements, and the first step is to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, by one having the authority from Jesus Christ. And if you really desire it there are Elders

now preaching in the South to whom you could have access, if your desires to do right overbalance public opinion."

He wrote again after reading the books and papers I sent him, and said he was living along mechanically, but his feelings and sympathies were with us. I could sooner vouch for the honor of those who are plain and outspoken, like this man, than for the long-faced Pharisee who might be "a walking Bible" and yet an unbeliever and a hypocrite in the sight of heaven.

The following extracts are from his letter in answer to mine, requesting the privilege of publishing our correspondence:

"I have been near death's door since I wrote you last: I was taken sick and many thought I would be numbered with the dead. But kind friends and a merciful God have helped me through. I am now able to attend to some of my business. My life was spared for the use of other people, more than for my own pleasure in life. You inquire how I get on learning and believing in Mormonism. My opinion is the same—if there is any of the true spirit of Christianity in the United States, it is among the Mormons. I am trying to walk in newness of life. I wrote to Elder John Morgan in Chattanooga, to learn when there would be a company of Mormon converts start to Salt Lake, with the thought that I would go with them, not to stay there but to be baptized, and see your magnificent temple, and find out how Mormons look and feel when I am among them. But that company left while I was so very sick.

"You say you are writing a book and wish to make some extracts from my letters. You have liberty to use them in any way you please, my name also, for I have written nothing but what I think is truth.

"The Mormons have done more to make a Christian out of me, than all the preaching I ever heard. The preaching and conduct of the preachers and other church members are calculated to make more skeptics than true Christians, for church members through this land are no more Christian-like than the outside world.

“You may want to hear what has become of my other woman. She is still living, and I think as much of her as I ever did, and she is as true as any Utah second wife. I have not seen her but once since October last. She would be a great stay and help to my wife and me in our declining and last days, if it were not for that foolishness called jealousy, that makes her think if I care anything for another woman it is that much robbed from the wife. But you know this is not so, as well as I do. It would make me think more of her. It reminds me of the dog in the fable, who, seeing his shadow in the stream, was so eager to rob the other dog of what he had, that he let his own morsel go to snatch it from him, and so lost all. If my wife does not rob herself in that way, there is no other woman robbing her.”

From his last letter, dated April 15th, 1884, I excerpt the following:

“My object is to ask you what I ought to do, situated as I am, and I appeal to you for information, because I think you are a reasonable, a thinking and a God-fearing woman, and one that knows more about my domestic affairs than any other, and I think a friend to me. I will suppose a like case and ask what your advice would be to such a man. He married a woman and he loved her, but his strong and vigorous love was like a blind vine, reaching its tendrils around for some object to support a part of its vigorous growth, till it naturally took hold of another stake and grew and spread all over it. This was unknown to the first stake till the second was covered up. But the meddlesome thought it unnatural and extravagant for one vine to monopolize two stakes, while others had but one, and would tear its tendrils loose and let them trail on the ground and be of no value, till the first stake thought it robbery for another stake to have the honor of supporting any part of the vine that first grew up around it, but did not add anything to itself, for it was already completely covered. It only crippled and destroyed in part, the beauty and fruitfulness of the vine. Now what ought to be done with that vine? Ought we to take a knife and cut them apart and let all that part on the second stake wither and die, or let it alone? By

cutting it off, that part on the first stake will be greatly damaged if not destroyed. What must I do with it? What would the great and good Master of the garden say if he were consulted about it? I would like to do His pleasure in this matter. I think He wants His garden so managed and cultivated as to realize the biggest crop of happiness, and that is the product and what this vine was planted for. What must I do to please the Great Master of the garden? Who is to blame? Will you please ask the Master and write to me what ought to be done. I have heard that He said: 'If thy hand offends thee cut it off, and if thy eye offend thee pluck it out.' But what about the heart? It would be suicide to pluck that out.

"Two of my children have married since I heard from you. I have four daughters married, but I would infinitely rather they were all married to my best son-in-law, than as they are. They could stay together then and be help and company to each other. But such is not the case, they are scattered one in one place, and all away from us. I dislike to trouble you, but if you can spare enough of your valuable time I would be pleased to receive an answer. I close a friend, wishing your people well. I would like to live among you, but I am here, and what I have is here, and I am almost worn out, but am trying to do right."

My reply to this was as follows:

"I have answered your last letter and said all that was needful in former letters. I gave you plainly to understand that there was only one true course which the Lord has marked out and no other will be acceptable to Him.

"To live with more than one woman, except you are sealed by one holding the Priesthood and authority from the Great Master, is nothing less than adultery. You have been shown this, and there is no use of my repeating it. There is but one door open for us all, and through no other can we enter the kingdom of heaven. Repentance and baptism are the first steps. When you have obeyed those commandments the Lord will fulfill His promise. The propensity of mankind is to deviate from the course which the Lord has pointed out for His chil-

dren to pursue. His way is straight and narrow and few there be that find it. You ask, 'What would the Great and good Master of the garden say if He were consulted?' Just what I have said, nothing more nor less; and if you wish to do His pleasure more than your own, you will not remain there in the condition you are now in, but will do as you resolved to do—come here, and see, and investigate more fully the principles of this work, and trust the 'Good Master' that He will reward you with the desires of your heart in righteousness. But if you cannot sacrifice nor take up your cross, to leave all for the truth you will lose the whole. Now this is God's word and not mine, and you have the privilege of receiving or rejecting it the same as others have; for He will receive none but the willing and obedient. When Abraham had made the sacrifice, the Lord restored it, which ought to be lesson enough for the rest of us. to be willing to try Him, by laying our all upon the altar. I have proven Him to be a good pay-master and therefore can afford to still trust Him.

"Greater peace and hope never filled the hearts of the Saints than to-day, and we rejoice in the growth and prosperity of Zion. We are trying to make ready for the time when those who do not take up arms against their neighbors, must needs flee to Zion for safety. That time is right upon us, and if you knew what was for your temporal as well as your spiritual welfare, you would hasten here and make yourself a home while there is peace, or you may be glad to flee with that you can carry on your shoulders. I remain as ever the friend of mankind."

I have withheld his name thinking it might bring needless trouble upon him and there would be nothing gained by it.