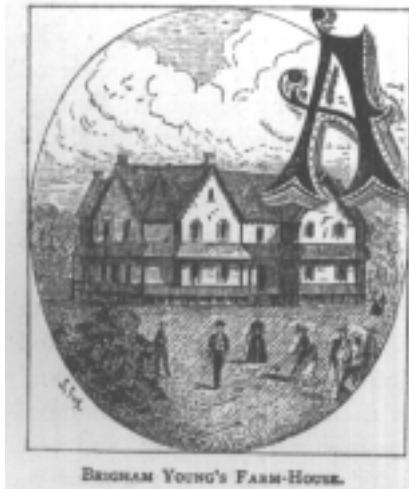


CHAPTER XVI.

FRIGHTFUL DEEDS OF BLOOD.—MORMONISM IN ITS TRUE LIGHT.

The Yates Murder.—Brigham and the Leading Mormons Arrested for the Crime.—Mr. Yates accused of being a Spy.—He is Arrested and his Goods Seized.—Bill Hickman takes possession of the Prisoner's Body.—Brigham Embezzles his Gold.—Another Saint steals his Watch.—Hickman carries him to Jones's camp.—He in murdered there while Asleep.—Hickman asks Brigham for a Share of the Spoil.—The Prophet refuses; sticks to every Cent.—Hickman's "faith" in Mormonism is Shaken.—His fellow-murderer Apostatizes Outright.—How Bill was finally "paid in Wives."—He tries a little matter of Seventeen.—Fiendish Outrage at San Pete.—Bishop Snow contrives the Damnable Deed.—The fate of his Victims.—A Mysterious Marriage.—The Feather-beds and the Prophet.—Mrs. Lewis comes to Live with Me.

ABOUT this time, when the Aiken party were cut off, as I have just related, by Brigham Young's express command, another horrible murder was perpetrated under circumstances of equal atrocity, which has since attracted a considerable amount of public attention.



BRIGHAM YOUNG'S FARM-HOUSE.

The reason of the Yates murder becoming so notorious, was not because it was so much worse than hundreds of other murders which have been committed in

278 BRIGHAM EMBEZZLES THE VICTIM'S GOLD.

Mormondom, but because Brigham Young and other Mormon officials were arrested as the murderers. Hickman turned State's evidence, and it is from his own account that I take the leading facts of the assassination.

Yates was a trader on Green River, and was ac-

cused by the Mormons of being a government spy. In those days, if no other charge could be brought against a person, he was called a "spy;" and this, of course, gave sufficient reason for putting him out of the way very summarily. The Mormons were also annoyed because, although among his stores he had a large quantity of ammunition, he would not sell it unless the purchasers bought other goods. They then accused him of supplying the army, and arresting him, carried him to Fort Bridger, while they took possession of his store, stock, etc.

Hickman was detailed to take the prisoner to the city, and Yates's money—nine hundred dollars in gold—was given him to carry to Brigham Young. His watch was "taken care of" by some one at Bridger. Hickman was accompanied by a brother of his, a Gentile, who was on a visit to him; Meacham, the one who was connected with him in the murder of Back; and a man of the name of Flack. On their way they were met by Joseph A. Young, who informed them that his father wanted Yates killed, and that he, Hickman, was to take him to Jones's camp, where he would receive further orders. The party arrived at camp that evening about sundown, and that night Yates was murdered as he lay asleep by the camp-fire.

Hickman and Flack carried the news and the money to Brigham. He was very affable until Hickman suggested that, as they had been to much expense, he thought part of the money ought to come to them. His manner changed at once; he reprimanded the men very severely, and told them that the money was needed for the church; it must go towards defraying the expenses of the war. Flack apostat-

279 THE DEVIL'S DIRTIEST WORK.—ANOTHER "ANGEL!"

tized at once; renounced Mormonism on the spot; it evidently didn't "pay" well enough to suit him, and Hickman himself was disgusted with the meanness of his master. He said that Brigham never gave him one dollar for all the "dirty work" he had done for him; he never made him the slightest present. But he paid him, it is said, in wives. I think he had seventeen, and a large number of children.

It was a class of men like this that the Reformation brought to the surface, and capital tool they made for a corrupt and bloodthirsty priesthood. They were earnest disciples of the "Blood-Atonement," and could slay an apostate of a Gentile with no compunctions of conscience. Yet, bad as they were, they did not equal in villainy the men who employed them, and then refused to pay them.

Everything, even the most trifling, that a person did, which was at all offensive to any member of the priesthood, was accounted apostasy, and punishment administered as speedily as possible. Hundreds of innocent victims have been sacrificed in this way, merely to gratify a

petty, personal revenge, or to remove some person who chanced to be distasteful. Fanaticism and bigotry were at that time at flood tide, and some of the most revolting and heart-sickening crimes were committed. Many of them



were unknown outside the places where they occurred, and so common were they that, beyond an involuntary feeling of horror, and a vague sort of wonder as to who would be the next victim, nothing was thought of them; until, after the excitement began to die away, and the people had time to recall the scenes of horror, they

began to realize, to a cer-

280 HORRIBLE CRIMES IN THE SETTLEMENTS.

tain extent, what they had been passing through. Some of the crimes were almost too shocking even to mention; they could not be given in detail.

Among the victims to priestly hatred and jealousy was a young man about twenty years of age, in San Pete County, named Thomas Lewis, a very quiet, inoffensive fellow, much liked by all who knew him, very retiring in his manners, and not particularly fond of gay society. He lived with his widowed mother, and the very sweetest, tenderest relations that can exist between a mother and child existed between them.

Contrary to his usual habit, he attended a dancing-party one evening at the urgent and repeated entreaties of his friends, and during the evening he was quite attentive to young lady-friend of his who was present, and with whom he was on terms of greater intimacy than with any other in the company. She knew his shy, retiring disposition, and seemed to take pleasure in assisting him to make the evening a pleasant one; just as any good-natured, kindly girl will do for a young fellow whom she likes, and who she knows is ill at ease and uncomfortable.

It happened that Snow, the Bishop of the ward in which the Lewis family lived, had cast his patriarchal eye on this young girl, and designed her for himself; and he did not relish the idea of seeing another person pay any attention to his future wife. He had a large family already, but he wished to add to it, and he did not choose to be interfered with.

Lewis's doom was sealed at once; the bewitched

Bishop was mad with jealous rage, and he had only to give a hint of his feelings to some of his chosen followers, who were always about, and the sequel was sure. He denounced Lewis in the most emphatic manner, and really succeeded in arousing quite a strong feeling of indignation against him for his presumption in daring to pay even the slightest attention to a lady who was destined to grace a Bishop's harem.

281 THE SAN PETE OUTRAGE.

The closest *espionage* was kept upon him by the Bishop's band of ruffians, and one evening a favorable opportunity presented itself; he was waylaid, and the Bishop's sentence carried out, which was to inflict on the boy an injury so brutal and barbarous that no woman's pen may write the words that describe it.

He lay in a concealed spot for twenty-four hours, weak and ill, and unable to move. Here his brother found him in an apparently dying state, and took him home to his poor, distracted mother, who nursed him with a breaking heart, until after a long time, when he partially recovered.

He then withdrew himself from all his former friends, and even refused to resume his place at the table with the family. He became a victim of melancholia, and would take no notice of what was occurring around him. He staid with his mother for several years, when he suddenly disappeared, and has never been heard of since; his mother and brother made every effort to find him, but they could not obtain the slightest clew of his whereabouts.

Whether this victim of priestly rule is dead or living must forever remain a mystery. It is probable that the emissaries of Bishop Snow have put an end to his existence. Yet during the whole of this affair the bishop was sustained by Brigham Young, who knew all about it. He has held his sacred office as securely as though the stain of human blood was not on his conscience; he has been sent on a mission to preach "the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor benighted nations of Christendom," and he has also taken more wives, which were sealed to him by Brigham Young in the Endowment House.

But a still greater marvel is, that the mother of Bishop Snow's poor victim still retains her faith in Mormonism, and since the cruel and disgraceful tragedy which deprived her of her son, has been sealed to Brigham Young as one of his wives. It was not pity that moved him to marry her, nor a desire to comfort her and lighten her burdens; but it was because he saw by so doing that he could advance his own interests.

Mrs. Lewis is never mentioned among his wives, yet he was sealed to her about two years after his marriage to me. Brigham's matrimonial experiences hardly find a place here, but as Mrs. Lewis alliance with the Prophet came about in a way through this tragedy, it may not be out of place even in this chapter on "Blood-Atonement."

San Pete was filled with so many sad memories to Mrs. Lewis, after the terrible fate of her son, that she could not remain there, reminded as she constantly was of the affair; so she removed to Provo, where she bought herself a very pleasant home, and, being a woman of considerable wealth, was living very comfortably, when Brigham commenced building a factory so near to her that it spoiled the beauty of the place and made it quite unpleasant. The agents then proposed to bring the water-course through her front yard—an arrangement to which she objected most emphatically. The agents, shocked at her unwillingness to have her property spoiled for the sake of Brother Brigham's factory, rushed in breathless haste to the Prophet, and told him of Mrs. Lewis's rebellion. He instantly formed a plan of inducing her to surrender. He went at once to Provo, and presented himself to Mrs. Lewis with an offer of marriage, saying at the same time, "I know you have had a great deal of trouble, Sister Lewis; you have suffered much for the sake of the gospel, and I pity you. I desire to do something for you; I wish in some way to comfort you; so I think you had better become a member of my family."

She was an old lady, with children all grown, and was perfectly independent of them or any one, and certainly had no need to marry for support. As the Mormons believe that no woman can enter heaven except some man go through the ordinances with her, very many are sealed in their old age to secure salvation; but as her husband had been a good Mormon, and they had attended to all the important matters, she was saved without prophetic intervention. She had no need to marry for a husband who should

283 THE PROPHET MAKES LOVE TO THE WIDOW.

look out for her welfare, as her children were ready and willing to do anything she needed done in the way of business. So she informed Brother Brigham that she didn't see why she should marry at all.

But Brother Brigham assured her that he wanted to marry as well for his own happiness as hers. He wanted her always near him, and it should be his first pleasure and business to look out for a nice place of residence for her, where he might look after her constantly. In fact he played the devoted and anxious lover with all the earnestness of a youth who is wooing his first *innamorata*, and in a fashion

that would have made some of his family stare had they overheard it.

The Prophet's earnestness was not without effect, and Mrs. Lewis took her lover's proposal into serious consideration, while he waited anxiously for an answer, with one eye on the coveted front yard, the other leering at the widow, who actually concluded to accept his proposals, and, absurd as it may seem, became one of his wives.

He was ashamed of himself after it was all over, and requested his bride to say nothing about "the transaction between them," as it was better that, for the present at least, no one but themselves should know anything about it. "They would not understand, you know," murmured he in his most drivellingly sweet accents. The trouble was, "they" would understand too well, especially when they say the water-course running through the once pretty front yard of the last Mrs. Young's home.

In a very short time he began to talk about his farmhouse, and extolling it as a most desirable residence. I was living there at the time, yet he said "it was plenty large enough for two families, and everything was arranged with such perfect convenience;" so he begged that she would move there at once. He grew eloquent over the beauties of the situation, and said, "It is a perfectly splendid place, the nicest farm-place I ever saw in my life. I would give any-

284 AN OLD GOOSE AND HER FEATHER-BEDS!

thing if my duties would permit me to live there; but I am kept away by circumstances, and cannot even think of it as a permanent residence, ardently as I long to do so." He



continued, "You can raise all the fowls there that you desire; it is a beautiful place for raising ducks and geese, and you may make as many feather-beds as you wish."

What greater inducements could he hold out to her? Dear to every old housekeeper's heart are her plump, soft, billowy feather-beds. We moderns are stifled by them; they

are oppressive, and suggestive of dust; but she pats their rotundity with loving hands; gives them many punches of affection, and builds a structure that is wonderful to behold—in which she hospitably smothers her chance visitor, and, while he is sweltering in its embraces, tells him proudly that “that bed is *live geese!*” The pride of Mrs. Lewis’s heart was her feather-beds—she wavered.

Her sons were very reluctant to have her leave her own home, and expresses themselves quite strongly on the subject when she mentioned it to them and asked their advice. Yet, in spite of their disapprobation, she concluded to go. Her husband was also her Prophet, and it might be that he spoke from inspiration. At all events, she would give heed

285 TOO BUSY TO SEE HIS NEW WIFE!

to his words, and regard his wishes; else what punishment and disgrace might she not bring upon herself? So, deaf to her children’s protestations—who, by the way, did not regard to call the farm divine bidding—she removed thither, and came into the same house with me. We neither of us liked this arrangement, as we were both firm believers in the theory that no one house was ever yet built large enough for two families. Yet we knew that it would not be wise to say anything to Brigham; so we were as quiet as we could be, and awaited his own time for our separation, Mrs. Lewis was a very kind, patient woman, and I got very fond of her, and we got on admirably together in our forced companionship, and managed to live together until my house in the city was finished, which was about four months after she arrived at the farm.

She said that she told Brother Brigham, most decidedly, that she had strong objections to moving into a house with another family, and he told me that he was intending to have me go to the city immediately, and that I would probably be gone before she arrived at the farm. She postponed her removal for some weeks after that, hoping that I would have gone by that time, and the coast entirely clear. She found on her arrival that Brigham had grossly misrepresented affairs at the farm. Nothing at all was as he had described it to her. This hoary old Claude Melnotte deceived his ancient Pauline most cruelly in the vivid pictures which he drew of the elegance of her future residence.

She made it her first business to visit the Prophet and ask for some repairs to be made—which, by the way, were sadly needed—but he declared that he had no time to attend to them—the same answer that he had made to my requests ever since I had lived there. A busier man than Brigham Young, when he wishes to be particularly engaged, was never seen, I believe; and his businesses is always the most pressing when any of his wives ask him to do anything for their comfort.

286 HOW BRIGHAM CHEATED THE OLD LADY.

When she had lived at the farm a year, she told me that Brigham had never been to see her once during all that time; but that he had got possession of her property, and was using it for factory purposes. The water-course ran through her yard, her house was made an office, and the whole place was so changed and so entirely spoiled as a residence, that she never could go there again to live. She must, whether she would or not, live there until Brigham chose to move her somewhere else, or until her children could find some place for her to go to. She supports herself entirely, independently of the man who has swindled her out of her home and her property; and the only assistance she receives is from her children, who are very kind to her, annoyed as they were at her for giving up her home, and, above all, allowing it to fall into Brigham Young’s hands. His duck-and-geese story was all misrepresentation, made use of merely to induce her to go to the farm; and when she got there she very soon found that she would have those lovely feather beds, not, at least, by raising fowls to supply the feathers. The Prophet’s imagination had evidently run away with the memory when he ardently painted the glories of the farm to his bride. This poor old lady was made a tool for the gratification of Brigham Young’s avarice, as her son had been the victim to one of his followers’ jealous anger. She has little to love Mormonism for. Its two leading doctrines, the “Celestial Marriage” and “Blood-Atone-ment,” have pretty thoroughly shut out happiness from her life, and rendered her in her old age lonely and dependent.

A man named Thomas Williams came early to Utah, was a good Mormon, and embraced polygamy. He was a lawyer, and had acquired both wealth and influence in his profession. He was, however, a very independent man, and a man of very decided opinions. He had differed from Brigham on many political questions, and he was a warm friend and staunch adherent of Judge Stiles, who had drawn

287 “DAMN MORMONISM, AND ALL MORMONS!”

upon himself the displeasure of the “boys” by his just and impartial judgments. Indeed, Williams had his office with the judge, and that was a crime, when Judge Stiles’s standing was taken into consideration. Williams was also in possession of knowledge concerning some murders that had taken place, had spoken very openly of them, and was becoming actually dangerous to Brigham and the other leaders,—so dangerous that Brigham went to his parents and complained of him and his acts, and ended by saying, “If Tom don’t behave himself, and stop making me trouble, I

must have him attended to.”

Soon after that Williams apostatized, and expressed himself very openly concerning the Mormon church and its leaders, although he knew that it must come to their ears, and that they would try, at least, to punish him for what they would consider his wickedness and profanity. He seemed to have lost all fear, as he had previously lost all belief in or respect for them. He started for California soon after his apostasy, designing to stay there, and to send for his family to join him, so soon as should be fairly settled. He was waylaid and killed by the “Indians” on the plains. His body was fearfully mutilated, and left hanging for the birds of prey. It was well known, however, at Salt Lake, that the “Indians” engaged in this assassination were *white*, and that Williams was murdered by the express order of the church authorities, who knew that he would prove a most dangerous enemy.

His fate was a direct contradiction to Brigham’s famous sermon on apostates, preached a few years before. Here is what he says about “independent apostates.”

“When a man comes right out like an independent devil, and says, ‘Damn Mormonism, and all Mormons,’ and is off with himself to California, I say he is a gentlemen, by the side of the nasty, sneaking apostates, who are opposed to nothing but Christianity. I say to the former, ‘Go in peace.’”

288 THE PROPHET AND HIS BOWIE-KNIFE.

Williams was certainly independent enough, but his independence did not save him.

In this same sermon, which was preached particularly against the “Gladdenites,” as the followers of Gladden Bishop were called,—a man who differed from Brigham in certain points of the Mormon belief, and who would not concede that he (Young) was the proper successor of Joseph Smith,—he said, —

“When I went form meeting last Sabbath, my ears were saluted by an apostate preaching in the streets here. I want to know if anyone of you who has got the spirit of Mormonism in you, the spirit that Joseph and Hyrum had, or that we have here, would say, ‘Let us hear both sides of the question. Let us listen, and prove all things.’ What do you want to prove? Do you want to prove that on old apostate, who had been cut off form the church thirteen times for lying, is anything worthy of notice? We want such men to go to California, or anywhere they choose. I say to these persons, ‘You must not court persecution here, lest you get so much of it you will not know what to do with it. DO NOT court persecution. We have known Gladden Bishop for more than twenty years, and know him to be a poor dirty cuss.’

“Now, you Gladdenites, keep your tongues still,

lest sudden destruction come upon you. I say, rather than that apostates should flourish here, I will *unsheathe my bowie-knife*, and conquer or die. Now, you nasty apostates, clear out, or judgment will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet. If you say it is all right, raise your hands. Let us call upon the Lord to assist us in this and every other good work.”

“I will unsheathe my bowie-knife,” has been a favorite threat of his, and it has been unsheathed hundreds of times. But some one of his Danite followers is called upon to use it, and when the murders are laid at his door, he

289 DROWNED IN THREE INCHES OF WATER.

stands coolly and boldly up, and his lying tongue says, I did not do these deeds.

For six or seven years, the spirit of slaughter seemed to stalk about in the beautiful Utah valleys, and *human blood was shed* on the slightest provocation. Did one man bear a grudge against another, he died in some mysterious manner, a Mormon court of investigation could never discover how. Was a man obnoxious to any of the church officers, he disappeared, and was never heard of again; or, like John V. Long, a clerk in Brigham’s office, who was the only person who hear the conversation between Brigham and the messenger sent from George A. Smith, just before the Mountain Meadow massacre, and who *wrote out the instructions* which the man was to carry back, was found dead in a ditch, “*drowned*” in *three inches of water*, “accidentally,” of course, since that was the decision of the Mormon jury. Did a man suspect his wife of infidelity, either she or her suspected lover, or both, fell a victim to his fury. Sometimes the suspicion was without foundation, but would be discovered too late, as in the case of the husband who murdered Dr. Vaughan in San Pete for supposed intimacy with his wife.

The man was an enthusiastic Mormon; his wife, a lovely woman, whose reputation had always been irreproachable. Dr. Vaughan was a friend of both, until the husband fancied that he was too fond of his wife. He went at once to Salt Lake City, took counsel of the Prophet, returned home, and shot the doctor dead as he was leaving church. He found out afterwards that his suspicion was unfounded, and that he murdered an innocent man, who had never wronged him, even in thought. He was haunted by remorse until his death. Yet he had only followed the teachings of his religious leader.

Such were the results of the teachings of the Blood-Atonement doctrine in Utah.