

and obey us if we do not obey our superior officers?

Furthermore, as the servants of God here, living in these mountains, the Lord is determined to try, to prove us in every way, and we are, as it were, just broke loose from the old barren stalk; the old slip is about being launched, and we are thrown onto God and our own resources, both in a governmental and a mental capacity. The devil will be engaged, the powers of hell let loose upon us.

Now let me ask how we are going to stand, except we are guided by the revelations of God?—And let me further ask, how you are going to get the revelations of God, except you live your religion and obey those set over you? Let me further ask, what is the use professing to be the people of God if we do not live our religion and magnify our calling?

I speak of these things merely for argument's sake. I believe that so far as I have seen, the general feeling among this people is to do right, but I merely speak of them, for it is necessary that we should have line upon line, precept upon precept; it is necessary that we should understand our true relationship.

For instance, there is an army coming up here; can any of you tell what will be the result, except the proper authorities dictate? Do you know what will be the best? But suppose we get through with this, and I suppose that some of you may begin to guess for this year; but can you for next? Is there a man here that can tell how and where to hide their families and their grain? Are there any in this congregation who know anything about it and that give counsel to this people, either for present or coming emergencies? This is bringing things to a focus. Now, you wise men or men of education, literary attainments or philosophers, speak and display your wisdom. If you cannot, and if we have not any knowledge in this matter, what next? Why we have got to be dependent upon the authority that is over us, and if we cannot submit, how can we be governed by it?

This principle pervades all, whether in a civil or military capacity or in any other capacity. We used to have a difference between church and state, but it is all one now. Thank God, we have no more temporal and spiritual. We have got church and state together, and we used to talk of baptism and repentance, and we used to whip out sectarian priests with their own Bible, and we thought that we were tremendous fellows.

But in what part of the Bible do you find what we are to do this year or the next? This will be part of a new Bible, for when it takes place, it will be written and then that will be a Bible and then the world will find that we shall have a 'Mormon Bible.'

Men have been opposed to the Book of Mormon because it was a new Bible. The poor fools did not know that wherever there was a true church there was revelation, and that wherever there was revelation there was the word of God to man and materials to make Bibles of.

We are all of us now in the harness and the issue is fast rolling upon us; it is therefore necessary that we understand our position. We have all had the opportunity of going away from here, but I do not know that you can have that opportunity now, for I see a proclamation here, and you cannot go without permission.

We have no vague theories, you have now to ask leave to go; the time has come for decisive action; and whether you are called to act in a religious, civil or military capacity, it is all in the kingdom of God and the will of God is to be done upon the earth as angels do it in heaven.

We are not fit to occupy our places in the kingdom, neither as High Priests, nor as Seventies, nor as Apostles, nor as anything else except we are willing and obedient. And the same thing applies to our families; then let us seek to submit ourselves to the law of God and do it.

I do not know but I have talked long enough. God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

THE SECOND WIFE.

[Concluded from page 232.]

Ellen started, and then the color rushed to her cheeks, as she answered, in a low voice, 'It is my mother.'

I had suspected as much. The resemblance was striking between the pictured face and little Harry.

'Is this the way that you preserve your mother's portrait?' I asked.

'Aunt Jane put it away before—'

'Before I came, Ellen?'

'Yes,' was the brief reply.

'Well, I shall take better care of it in future.—I am not come to stand between you and your mother, Ellen. I wish you to love and honor her memory above all others. I shall try to make you wiser and happier than ever, instead of gloomy and sad.'

There was a slight quiver about Ellen's firm lip, as she turned and left the room. I began to feel encouraged. That evening I had a fire made in the parlor, the piano was unlocked, and I took my music from my trunks. In the 'gloaming,' before there was any light in the room, save that of the tremulous fire-light, I sat down to play.—They were all there; Jane at croquet work in a corner and the children seated silently about the fire.

I found the piano an excellent instrument, and after playing a variation, which drew a sigh from the depths of Miss Jane's bosom, and shout of delight from my little Harry, I began to sing. It was an old, plaintive, Scotch song that I chose; something to touch and melt the heart.

May and Harry were standing, one on each side of me, when I ended, and their faces expressed their delight.

'I like that,' said Harry, 'I wish Aunt Jane wouldn't keep the piano locked, so that no body can touch it.'

A loud warning cough from his amiable aunt made him shrink a little closer to me. 'Do sing another, please?' whispered May, and I sang Goethe's 'Miller and the Brook,' that wild, merry old song:

What do I say of a murmur
That can murmur be?
'Tis the water nymphs that are singing
Their round-dances under me.

May was in ecstasies. 'Oh will you teach me to play?' she asked. 'It would make me so happy!'

'May!' said Jane, sternly. But the girl did not heed it; her faith in her aunt was fast decreasing.

'I will, certainly, if you wish it,' I replied.—'Both Ellen and you may take lessons as soon as you please to begin. I do not wish you to be confined wholly to arithmetic.'

I turned from the piano and sat by the fire, after having lighted the lamp. May and Harry were dancing about the middle of the room, and even Ellen smiled at their rudeness. Jane, seeing that they took no heed of her dreary coughs and sighs, rose and left the room. I took quick advantage of her absence.

Going to the bookcase, I selected an interesting volume and sat down with it near the lamp. 'You have heard of Joan of Arc, have you not, Ellen?' I asked.

'I do not remember that I have,' she answered. 'Who was she?'

'Her story was a very wonderful one. I will read, if you would like to hear it,' I answered.

'Is it true,' cried Harry, leaving his play.

'Yes, Harry. It happened many years ago, in France. Shall I read it?'

Harry and May were already eager to hear it, and Ellen looked interested though she said nothing. I took Harry in my lap, and began to read the strange, thrilling story. All listened with the deepest attention.

By and by Ellen interrupted me, saying—'If you are tired, let me read it awhile, mother.'

I was tired and gave it up to her gladly; she called me 'mother!'

At nine, Aunt Jane, came and called them to bed.

'No, no, aunt; we'll come as soon as we find out what became of poor Joan!' cried May.—'Shall we stay, mother?'

'Let them stay a little longer,' I said, to Miss Jane. The door closed, and Ellen proceeded with the story.

'Sing us one little song!' said May, when the story was ended. I complied willingly, and sang 'Let us love one another.' When I had finished, May sprang up and gave me a good night kiss.—Harry followed her example.

'I want one more,' I said turning to Ellen, and with a grave smile, she kissed me, and bade me good night. That night my pillow was haunted with happy dreams.

Much of the ensuing week was spent in re-arranging the rooms, in order to give them a more cheerful appearance. I took down the portrait of the first Mrs. Fleming from its garret corner, and hung it over the mantel in the parlor. I reframed the beautiful landscape, and adorned a little room opening from the back parlor, which I converted into a miniature library. I went with the children into the fields to hunt for early May flowers, with which to fill the vases and make the rooms bright and fragrant.

May took her first music lesson, and was already promising to sing 'Let us love one another,' on Christmas Day, at which time her father would be at home. Ellen had so far descended from her cold heights of reserve as to ask me to learn her crayon drawing and I was astonished at the artist talent she already exhibited.

One morning, when I had been about a fortnight with them, Jane came to the breakfast table in her traveling dress. We were all surprised—I most of all, for I had hoped the happiness of the children would win her kindness also; but I was mistaken. 'Where are you going, aunt?' asked May, her blue eyes expanding with astonishment. Miss Jane deigned no answer, but ate her breakfast in unbroken silence, then, turning to me, announced her decision.

'Mrs. Fleming, you cannot expect me to stay here content, when I see you daily undoing with all your might what I have been laboring so hard to accomplish. These girls were growing up, in my care, discreet, sober, and reasonable. I shut out the vanities and follies of the world from their knowledge. I reared them in prudence and soberness. But Arthur Fleming must bring a strange wife here, who, in two short weeks, could, by her wily softness of manner, win their foolish young hearts away from their tried friend and fill their heads with vanity. I will not stay where I and my teachings are objects of contempt. I leave you to your painting and playing, your singing, and boquet making. I am not penniless as you probably suppose. I have still a home to go to, now that I am driven thanklessly from this one.'

My eyes filled with tears at these scornful words. The children looked wonderingly at me and at her.

'Don't go, aunt! Mother doesn't want you to go,' whispered May, the sweet little peacemaker.

'I don't know who drives from here!' said Ellen sarcastically.

'Jane, I wish you to stay with us,' I said. 'It is right that I, Captain Fleming's wife, should be a mother to his children, and take their care and educate on into my own hands. I mean to make them happy in their home, in their studies, and to fit them for good and useful lives. You can help me in this work, and I will be your friend.—Will you stay, Jane?'

'No, Mrs. Fleming. I will not stay where I am a mere cipher. But, children, I do not do you. If you are ever fatherless, or in trouble, will come to you, and you shall have your home with me again.'

The stage coach, which Jane had secretly ordered to call for her, now rattled up to the door and she took her seat in it. She gave a nod of friendly greeting to me, a farewell of compassion at affliction to the children, and then the coach drove away.

I was alone with home, children, and peace.

CHAPTER III.

Six months passed rapidly, and how pleasantly my vivid recollection of them testified. As the village-schools taught but little, and I was fully competent to instruct the children myself, I spent three hours of every morning in study with them. Two after-noon in a week I devoted to May's music and Ellen's drawing; on the other after-noon they were free to practice at home, or to visit their village friends, and receive visits in return. Our evenings were spent in reading, and in the three months of that Summer they gained more intelligence than in years before.

Their interest in knowledge was aroused, and what ever they read was made a subject of free and cheerful conversation, thus fixing important facts in their memories, and training their minds to habits of active thought. Ellen adorned the walls of our sitting room and little library with several very fine crayon pictures, and May added to our evening readings the charm of her sweet singing.

At Christmas time we expected Captain Fleming. With what a glad pride I looked upon my happy group, and thought of the gratitude he would feel, when he saw their improvement and witnessed their affection for myself. I looked forward with a beating heart to the meeting.

It was a fortnight before Christmas, and we were already deeply engaged in preparation for the merry season. Green boughs, with which to decorate the rooms, were being made into festoons and garlands, and in a sly corner, the Christmas tree was waiting its hour to triumph. Ellen was hurrying to finish a picture of Santa Claus to hang over the Christmas tree; and May was practising 'Let us love one another,' at the piano forte; while little Harry, entered with even greater zeal, if possible, into the preparations for the festivities.

It was afternoon, and Ellen and I had been discussing the propriety of inviting some friends to enjoy our Christmas Eve with us. We were now in daily expectation of Captain Fleming, and every sound of carriage wheels made us rush to the windows.

'Father is come!' cried Ellen, as the sound of wheels, instead of passing, ceased at our door, and we simultaneously sprang up and ran to the window. There, indeed, stood the expected coach, but who was that old lady, with a green handbox held tightly in her arms, now bounding out of the coach door, sending sharp glances up at the windows, while the coachman took down her trunk?

'It is Aunt Jane!' said Ellen, with a long sigh of disappointment, and she looked into my face inquiringly.

'It is too bad, too bad!' said May, half crying 'for her to come and spoil all just as we were to have such a merry Christmas.'

'Well, meet her kindly and bid her welcome,' I said, and by that time the hall door had opened and Jane Fleming stood in the midst of us receiving our greetings with a kind of a grim smile.—The girls divested her of all her many shawls and cloaks and furs, Harry drew a chair for her close to the fire.

As she warmed her feet at the grate, she looked around her with a singular expression of pity, mixed with triumph.

'I have kept my promise, children,' she said.—'I told you if any thing happened, I would come to you.'

I started from my seat, and a shudder of terrible foreboding passed through me, as I remembered the promises to which she referred.

'Jane! Jane Fleming, what do you mean?—I cried.

She wiped the corner of her eyes with the handkerchief. Then she said—

'Ha! It is as I thought. You see that I, living on the seashore as I do, get news some days in advance of you. I said to myself when I heard it, that it would be printed in your weekly paper and you would not get it before to-morrow. So I thought I had better step into the stage and ride down to prepare your minds.—Poor children! Poor children!'

'What is it?' said Ellen, grasping her aunt's wrist with a kind of nervous fierceness.

This suspense was growing intolerable. Jane fixed her eyes steadily on Ellen's countenance, and answered slowly—

'Last week, in the great storm, the May Fleming was wrecked!'

A low cry escaped May's lips.

'Jane! I gasped, 'my husband—where is he?'

She looked at me composedly.

'The May Fleming was wrecked and sunk—Save the mate and one sailor, who floated two days on a broken raft, every soul was lost!'

I could utter neither cry nor moan. I only looked into the faces of my children, who gathered about me, indulging their wild sorrow in pitiful cries. Ellen only, after a brief time, seemed to comprehend my bewildering anguish. She put her young, strong arms about me, and led me, unresisting, to my chamber; there, watched by her alone, I lay silent and motionless.

But my brain was busy. 'Is it to this, an untimely death?' I thought, 'that all I love are fated to come? My heart was wrapt in my beautiful Harry, and he laid down to die in the glory of his youth. My love rose out of his grave and gathered itself, strong as life, about my husband; and now, in so little a while, he is gone also. Was it for this that I gave my mind, my heart, my soul, to his children, only that they should look up to me with their pitiful faces, and cry, 'we are orphans? Where was he, when we, his wife and his children, were making Christmas garlands?—We were singing and weaving the holly and cedar by the warm firelight, while he, now struggling,

now failing, and sinking, was smothered in the horrible wave?'

Such thoughts as these filled my brain with ceaseless horror, and all day I lay as one benumbed. But suddenly as it grew dark, and Ellen brought a lamp into my chamber, I was struck by her settled expression of woe. I had forgotten that I was not the only sufferer. That thought gave me strength. I rose, took her by the hand, and went down to the other children.—I gathered them about me, and we all wept together. Then, and not till then, did I feel that I could speak to them of comfort.

The next morning our paper came, and its long account of the wreck confirmed the sad tidings.—Days passed—slowly, tearfully. I was beginning to realize that we, of late such a joyful group, were now the widow and the fatherless.'

It was evening, and we all sat in the little library. The door of the parlor behind us was ajar, but there was no light in there: only one lamp burned on the piano-forte, which had been moved into the little room.

Harry lay in my arms asleep, his soft curls falling over his forehead, and half veiling his fresh, fair face. Ellen and May, one on each side of me, sat at work on mourning dresses; Jane, too, in the corner was sewing black thibet. How different our labor from that with which we had expected to usher in the Christmas Eve!

By and by, Ellen looked up with an anxious expression.

'Mother, are we poor?' she said.

I was glad that I could answer in the negative. 'But,' I added, 'we know not how soon we may be. This great misfortune has taught us that nothing is sure. We must not lean idly on what we possess, but prepare ourselves for labor, if need be. To-morrow I wish you all to begin again your studies.'

Jane dropped her needle and thread. 'I thought it was understood that the children should go home with me,' she said. 'Perhaps you think I am poor and helpless; but you are mistaken. On the contrary, I am probably better able than you to take care of the children.'

This announcement startled me; but there was no need. May threw her arms round my neck and whispered, 'I will not leave you, mother,' while Ellen, her fine eyes glowing with excitement, answered, quietly and firmly—

'Our mother has the best claim upon us, Aunt Jane, and until she sends us, we will never leave her. We have never been so happy as in this half past year. We love her better than all other friends, and now that our father is gone we will not leave her alone.'

My heart was thrilled with gratitude that I could not utter. I could only give my noble Ellen a look of thankfulness, and say—

'I will be as faithful to you as you have been to me, Ellen.'

'Hush!' said May, starting from her seat.—'What was that sound?' She went to the window and looked out. 'It was only the wind,' she added, and sat down by me again.

Jane shot indignant glances at the children.

'I little thought, when I came here to work and wear myself out for you, that you would so soon desert me for a stranger?'

'Aunt Jane,' said Ellen quickly, 'remember it is our mother of whom you speak—our second mother to whom we owe so much.'

Miss Fleming was evidently annoyed, but was silent.

'I do hear a footstep,' said May, and again she peeped from the window, but all was dark and silent.

My heart ached with weary dissension, and I made a last attempt at peace.

'Sister Jane—you shake your head, but you were his sister, and you must therefore be mine—for his sake I forgive you the many attempts you have made to turn my children's hearts against me, but forever a truce let there be silence on this theme. I am no stranger in this house, but hold a mother's place to the children my husband left in my care. For them henceforth, and for them only, shall I live and labor. I have thus far tried to do them good, and they themselves bear witness to my success. Trust them to me, and let there be no more harshness between us—for his sake.'

Jane Fleming burst into tears. She wept for a few moments, and her heart was softened.

'Agnes, forgive me!' she said, to my astonishment and joy. 'You think me heartless, but indeed, I am not, though I have been harsh. It was my love for my brother and his children, that made me wickedly jealous of you. But I am now a mourner with you and them. For his sake forgive me.'

Then was a moment of silent, pleased surprise, and then I clasped her hand warmly, and called her 'sister.' Ellen gravely stooped down and kissed her, and little May, rejoiced, sprang to the piano-forte, and sang with her whole heart 'Let us love one another.'

As she ceased and turned her smiling face toward us, there was a sound behind, a quick footstep toward the hall, the door was flung open, and—

Had one risen from the dead?

'My wife, my children, my blessed Agnes!'—said Captain Fleming, his voice hoarse with emotion, and before we could utter a word of welcome or surprise, we were all clasped in his strong, living arms. The rapture of that hour, who could speak to portray.

'Forgive me, Agnes, for playing the listener,' he said. 'It was not premeditated, but as I came in I heard your voices, and could not but pause a moment before surprising you. How can I ever thank you, how repay you for your love to my children and to me?'

These words and many more fell from his lips as he clasped me again with warm affection. I was repaid for all my labor, all my sorrow.

Then followed questions, explanations, words of joy and welcome. His good ship, indeed, had been lost in the fearful storm, but the account of