

## SCENES IN AN AMERICAN HAREM.



BRIGHAM YOUNG AND HIS FAMILY ON THEIR WAY TO CHURCH.

At last one half of my journey and its object was accomplished; for, seated in a buggy drawn by four lean and weary mules, myself and companion rolled over the "benches" that surround Salt Lake Valley. There lay the city before us about which so much has been lately said and written; a sort of hogus brick-and-mortar John the Baptist, pretending to cry out of the wilderness, "The Master is coming, make ye ready!" We stopped to inquire of a little urchin the road to the store of Messrs. Livingston and Co., to whom we had letters of introduction. He coolly surveyed us all over, squirted out the juice of the tobacco he was masticating, and with the utmost gravity replied, "Waal, if yer'll take me up, I guess I'll show yer!"

*Necessitas non habet leges*, so we consented; arrived, introduced ourselves, and were cordially welcomed by the very gentlemanly members of that firm. Of course our first anxiety was to see the Prophet and his seraglio; for our curiosity felt much piqued to gaze at the twenty-five American women who could approve of polygamy, and love and be faithful to such an imitator of the bashaws of many tails.

"Oh," said Mr. B., of the above-named firm, "if that be all you wish, you can see some sixteen of them ride past here directly in Colonel Little's big omnibus."

You may be sure we watched for the opportunity, nor had we to wait very long; for, sure enough, in a large, awkward vehicle, drawn by a span of

stout horses, sat sixteen of the wives of the prophet, priest, and king of the Mormon hierarchy.

The omnibus was large and lumbering, the driver was a bright-looking negro, and he held the reins and whip, and squared his elbows, as if driving a sulky. I peered curiously inside; there were three who had little babies with them. Some wore their hair plain, some wore ringlets. Several of them were rather old, and I thought rather ugly; but some of them were really pleasing, almost pretty. One they called Lucy—and hearing her named I looked at her more than at the others—was a really beautiful young woman, of about twenty-five; she had blue eyes, straight nose, brown hair, fair complexion, and white teeth, enhanced by a delicate tinge of rose on the cheeks. It appeared very strange to see her surrounded by such associations, and bound by such ties.

Mr. B. pointed out to me, as the vehicle passed slowly by, a rather tall, majestic-looking person, who was seated in one corner, and told me that she was a little the favorite of this horrid old sensualist. Her expression was a sadly subdued one; but, as he remarked, had her position been what every pure woman has the right to demand—the sole possessor of her husband's affections—she would have been a magnificent woman. I think he said her name was Emeline.

The slow pace of the omnibus reminded me strangely of a hearse, the serious and sad faces of the riders seemed almost like mourners, and a very

small stretch of fancy conceived that they were going to the burial of their dead hopes and clay-cold hearts, while the grinning negro suggested the d—l, who might be gloating over their madness and their ruin.

I drew a long breath, while Harry whistled a shrill note, to relieve ourselves.

"Well," said I, "those sixteen women are all really the wives of Brigham Young?"

"Yes, Sir," replied Mr. B.; "and he has some nine or ten others beside."

"What are they like?" demanded Harry.

"Are they as good-looking as these?"

"Something about the same; but wait till tomorrow, and I'll go with you to the Tabernacle, and I'll point them out to you as they go into meeting. It is very likely Brigham will preach."

We expressed our obligations, and waited. That Sunday seemed to me to be a very peculiar day. Every thing was completely still in the neighborhood of our boarding-house. The very air seemed asleep, and hanging in gray, misty clouds around the jagged peaks of the Wahsatch Mountains. We strolled up after breakfast toward the Mormon conventicle, and the scene was changed. A lot of rough-looking boys, who seemed half intoxicated, were shouting and laughing, rushing about on horseback near the Tithing-office, on the steps of which lolled a parcel of lazy fellows. We passed near enough to hear they were talking of having cheated some one in a horse-trade. One of the

youths, riding a small but very fast gray horse, I remembered to be Brigham's son—Brigham, Jun.—whom I had spoken to on the day before.

"Not very pious," muttered Harry to me, as we passed them.

"Not very sober," I added, as one of them reclined on his saddle.

They rode off, and wagons loaded with people began to roll into the Temple block. Mr. B. nudged me as a stout, portly, good-looking man, dressed in a long green cloth coat, with black velvet cuffs and collar, passed by, and at his side a tall, large man, whose fingers were playing with a massive silver watch-guard that crossed his black velvet vest.

"That is Brigham, and the tall one is Kimball," whispered Mr. B.

I looked at the Prophet; thought him rather a jolly-looking man. His companion had twitched lips, and seemed very repulsive. As they passed by Mr. B. they stopped, and Brigham shook hands with him, and we were soon introduced to the celebrated man. He cordially invited us to look in at his office the next day, and passed on. Then came the women, dressed in a kind of Bloomer costume, with pantaloons like those of the men, dresses made like a man's over-coat, tall straw hats with broad ribbons. This outrageous costume was invented by Miss Eliza Snow, one of the strong-minded women of Zion. I was amused at the idea of strong-minded women being there; and when I



A DINNER AT BRIGHAM YOUNG'S.