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Date:

Booklet of Mary Elizabeth Clark Robinson

This tragic accident threw a heavy burden upon Mary E., who must have had to handle a man's work in addition to the care of her children and the supervision of the household. As a consequence, the young bride was left to take over the nursing and intimate needs of the sick man. It was a difficult situation. Memories of her previous marriage must have entered in to complicate it, when, perhaps for the first time, the younger woman became aware of what had happened. At any rate, shortly before the birth of her youngest child and only daughter in 1875, the older wife, feeling frustrated, over-burdened, and unappreciated, sought the haven of her father's hospitable home, and moved her family there, fulling intending, of course, to return. To the afflicted husband it looked like desertion. Whatever factors combined to fan jealousies and breed misunderstandings seem to have been present with the result that another divorce followed, much against her will; and she and her children were never welcomed into the Robinson household again.

Time, as we know, has a way, God-proved, of healing sorrows; and while scars may remain, life goes on in much the usual routine. Mary Lizzie, as she was called by her brothers and sisters, was well-provided for and always welcome in the spacious home of her prosperous father, who had rare business sense and was a first-rate executive and manager. Blessed for this role by the Prophet Joseph Smith when, as a lad of eighteen he had given all the money he had for the building of the Nauvoo Temple, even as he had journeyed across the plains, Ezra T. Clark had been among the best equipped and the most able to share with others. His forethought had resulted in his successfully

bringing in many kinds of seeds and a few chickens into the valley; and with his excellent dairy and grain start, hay, and many varieties of fruits planted, the first start of honey-bees in the valley; and even sugar cane included among his crops, he was amply supplied with the necessities of life. He had set the example of plural marriage in his family when in 1862 he selected his wonderful second wife, Susan Leggett, for whom he wisely provided a separate home; yet the two families were welded so closely together that the children felt they belonged to both households, and were as welcome in one as in the other. Never were the two mothers known to quarrel. They cooperated beautifully in all things, and loved each other in a warm and sensible way that transcended mere sentiment.

It was in the older home, though, that family parties were held and provisions stored for all. Cloth, purchased by the bolt, cheeses brought in by the wagon load from Bear River Valley, whole beeves kept frozen during the cold weather, barrels of flour and molasses from the farm molasses mill -honey--everything was freely accessible to both families as needed. Dried peaches, and likely other fruits and corn, products of "cutting bees", when family and friends gathered to save the abundant crops, setting the luscious halves to dry on scaffolds, and still lacking space, spread out on roof tops, turned over now and then until ready to be sacked, hung by wires to protect from mice and other vermin, but used by the families as needed, even to take to market at Christmas time in exchange for merchandise presents. After a day or two of the "Cuttings" there would be an evening's celebration---a candy-pull, games around a bonfire, and in late seasons dough-nuts or pumpkin pie

served. Perhaps even a picnic as hayracks full of young people drove down to the shores of the Great Salt Lake, about three miles away.