

Edward W. Tullidge and *The Women of Mormondom*

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IN THIS PAPER, I SING the virtues of Edward W. Tullidge, English convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, cultural enthusiast, and serious journalist and author. Tullidge, who was mercurial, changeable, and emotionally and perhaps mentally unstable, wrote despite his difficulties, turning out five long books, editing several periodicals and contributing significant essays to others. Diligent and optimistic, he was a victim of his broad aspirations, falling short of what he might have done. Able, hard-working, and articulate, he was also a heavy drinker given to emotional outbursts. Much of his work has been dismissed or ignored, valued primarily for the large chunks of undigested biographical material he included. I want to take him seriously.

Tullidge wore his heart on his sleeve, serving his current grand ideal, whatever it was. He had troubled relationships with the LDS church, the RLDS church, and the Godbeite movement. He yearned to be a devoted follower and to promote the virtues of an institution, but could not stick; disillusioned, he moved on to more promising venues. He wanted the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be part of something grand, to shine in a universal context. Historians label him a "rebel historian." Ronald Walker explains Tullidge as one who saw Mormonism as a "distinctive form of American culture."¹

Tullidge was born in England in 1829 into a cultured, middle-class, Methodist family, then apprenticed to his cousin as a coach builder and painter. At the age of seventeen, he joined the Latter-day Saints. In 1848, at age twenty, he began twelve years of missionary activity in Great

1. William Frank Lye, "Edward Wheelock Tullidge, the Mormons' Rebel Historian," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (January 1960): 56–75. Ronald W. Walker, "Edward Tullidge: Historian of the Mormon Commonwealth," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976): 55.

Britain, without "purse or scrip," making money by mending shoes.² He wrote for the *Millennial Star*, published in Liverpool, where he exhibited considerable literary promise as well as mystical enthusiasm. He dramatically offered his services to Brigham Young to assist in developing a culture and an epic history for the church. He foresaw a Mormon *Iliad* or *Paradise Lost* with Young as the central hero. Tullidge envisioned "a truly national or Mormon literature, national education of every kind, national music, painting, and every branch of art." He wanted the church to rank in the "first class of civilized society" and for Zion to move toward greatness,³ a vision which many of us promote. He wrote to Brigham Young, "I shall never rest until I am in your hands, nor be satisfied until I am engaged in your service."⁴ Young, more inclined toward action than talk, gave him limited encouragement.

Tullidge and Elias L. T. Harrison began the first of several periodicals in 1864. Tullidge wrote descriptive pieces on Mormon topics for Eastern periodicals, the New York *Galaxy* and the *American Phrenologist*, which were considered impartial and sophisticated. He was the first writer to bridge the gap between inside and outside views of the church, a synthesis to which many of us still aspire. Tullidge hoped his articles would inform the world, but Brigham Young told him not to expect too much, just to do his best and leave the result with the Lord.⁵ Tullidge then wrote editorials for a new publication, favoring spiritual life and power, international brotherhood, and urging Mormonism to grow and help civilize the world.

His friends Elias Harrison and William Godbe, disillusioned with the autocratic Brigham Young, moved toward Mormon reform and then into spiritualism. They were excommunicated for apostasy. Tullidge resigned his own membership in their support. He wrote a number of plays before reconciling with the LDS church and writing a life of Brigham Young. He also wrote *The Women of Mormondom*,⁶ this paper's subject, and *Life of Joseph the Prophet* before allying with the RLDS church, which bought an interest in the latter work. He served a mission for the RLDS church, preaching against "polygamic theocracy" in Utah, but he soon left that group. Tullidge later wrote *History of Salt Lake City and Its Founders*,

2. Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, "Edward W. Tullidge: Celebrant of Mormon Nationalism," in *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 29–31. However, Walker in "Edward Tullidge" credits him with sixteen years of missionary activity, rather than twelve.

3. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 31–32.

4. Walker, "Edward Tullidge," 58.

5. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 32–34.

6. Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877).

which includes extensive historical and biographical material.⁷ Although he projected a multi-volume series, it was never completed.⁸

Edward Tullidge married three times. His first two polygamous, childless marriages ended in divorce. His third marriage produced ten children. He died at 65 in 1894.

Quixotic, mercurial, self-destructive, Tullidge often discarded positions he had once profoundly claimed. He remained true to some Mormon ideals even as he warred with the church. In a characteristically dramatic statement, he noted how hard he was working, "fighting with my characters and themes through the battles. . . their eventful trying lives." He threw himself "into brain fever or delirium for three weeks," barely escaping with his life. "I have, however, my will and nerve again and can execute my work as well as ever. In one thing at least I am a Mormon—I am hard to kill."⁹ He was a cultural Mormon who preferred the pristine religion of Joseph Smith to the evolving frontier autocracy of Brigham Young.¹⁰

In this paper, I want to consider Tullidge's *The Women of Mormondom*, a large book with 550 pages of text, a chronology from before Eve to the 1870s, with an international scope. What have historians said of this book?

William Frank Lye, who taught at Ricks College, and wrote an article on Tullidge in 1960, said little of the book except that it showers praise on Eliza R. Snow, a kindred poetic spirit.¹¹

Ronald Walker, who wrote extensively of Tullidge and his Godbeite friends in *Wayward Saints*, dismisses *Women of Mormondom* as autobiographies of "prominent Mormon women tied loosely together by his epic prose." He notes that Tullidge wrote to kill Fanny Stenhouse's negative book, *Tell It All*,¹² "not because she wars against her polygamic life with [her husband Thomas B. H.] Stenhouse, which is natural, nor against Brigham Young, which is also very natural with us Apostates, but because she has blasphemed against her sisters and the religious system that I have worshiped."¹³ Tullidge then, will favor the sisters and the

7. Edward W. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City and Its Founders* (Salt Lake City: Star Printing Company, 1886).

8. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 34–38, 38–40.

9. Edward W. Tullidge to B[athsheba] W[alker] S[mith], 18 January 1875, Tullidge Name File, Historian's Office, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City.

10. Lye, "Edward Wheelock Tullidge," 72.

11. *Ibid.*, 66.

12. Mrs. T. B. H. Stenhouse, *Tell It All: The Story of a Life's Experience in Mormonism: An Autobiography* (Hartford, Conn.: A. D. Worthington, 1874).

13. Walker, "Edward Tullidge," 65–66. Ronald Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 309–10.

system. Tullidge, Walker says, adorned the women with a "peculiar prose," and found them "collectively without a flaw." Walker notes that the book's exaggerated language, awkward syntax, and repeated exclamations fail to sustain a narrative, epic history.¹⁴

Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington note the book's defensive nature which makes it panegyric, overwritten, and of patchwork organization. They find the book's greatest contributions in its original histories. They do note, however, that Tullidge stood alone as a Mormon feminist historian before the revitalization of the women's movement in the 1970s.¹⁵

Such have been the dismissive evaluations of this man and his large book. One might wonder what the hard-lined Sister Snow thought of the boozy, changeable, apostate enthusiast. In fact, her attitudes toward him were also changeable.

Snow was involved in the *Women of Mormondom* from the beginning. She put her considerable prestige behind the book and was engaged in gathering funds for publication on subscription. The *Woman's Exponent* reports a meeting of the Senior and Junior Retrenchment societies where Miss Snow "laid the subject of the Woman's Book" before the group and "solicited [the sisters' aid] in behalf of the publishing of it." She also requested that "any special items in their lives, or spiritual manifestations which had been given them which they considered strong testimonies upon the principles of the gospel," be recorded and given to her or Mr. Tullidge.¹⁶ The *Woman's Exponent* frequently spoke in favor of him as "one of the most gifted literary men of America" and provided a very favorable review in which he praised LDS women: "There is a providence in the very attitude of Mormon women. The prophesy is distinctly pronounced in the whole history of their lives, that they shall be apostolic to the age."¹⁷

A letter from Snow to an unnamed correspondent documents her editorial and financial efforts on behalf of the book: "I wish you would get up some interesting items immediately." The purpose was to present a conception of church history: "They want particularly the testimonies of the sisters how they have lived polygamy—whether their hearts have been broken by it—whether they were forced into it &c." She notes that the author will "dress it up in his own style." She urges haste in sending the testimony, "(which will be good for your grand children to read) do not wait a day."¹⁸ Tullidge himself noted that Utah women would be of

14. Walker, "Edward Tullidge," 69.

15. Bitton and Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 37.

16. *Woman's Exponent*, 5 (11 November 1876).

17. *Ibid.*, 6 (1 January 1878): 119; 6 (15 August 1877): 45.

18. E. R. Snow to ?, n.d., Peterson family Papers [ca. 1844–1957], MS 2175, 37290, ARCH-88, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, 2–3.

great interest to the general public and allowed the women to choose which of them would be handsomely engraved to illustrate the volume.¹⁹ Clearly Snow, Tullidge, and the Relief Society were collaborating closely, hoping to reap propagandistic and pecuniary benefits.

Yet in 1878, three years after soliciting her sisters, and a year after the publication of the volume, Snow was carefully distancing herself from Tullidge. Tullidge had acknowledged her help in revising the Smith volume, a position she denied. He had presented the manuscript for her perusal, and she had suggested a few alterations to the biographical narrative, but loftily refused to accept the position of reviewer or critic. Neither Snow nor Joseph F. Smith cared to assist Tullidge in throwing "an air of Church authority around [Tullidge's] work."²⁰

The Women of Mormondom is shrouded in changing opinions, even as the author was perennially changeable. Yet it still stands, in print since 1877, and is worthy, I decided, of another look. The book provides real plums of quoted personal accounts, undigested and under-synthesized, held together by a heroic dough. I decided against searching for gems among the autobiographical plums. We all know their value: the preservation of accounts which might not have been written and might well have been lost. Instead, picking through the epic prose, the overwritten panegyric, the wild enthusiasm, I wanted some sense of Tullidge's plan and explication, his ideas for illuminating the early sisters and their time. I wanted to see beyond his eccentricity as he speaks from his world to ours. I wanted to find what the book holds, apart from Tullidge's dramatically vacillating reputation.

Let us discuss three of Tullidge's general strategies. First, as I mentioned before, Tullidge writes for audiences inside and outside the church, on both sides of the abyss. He was not appreciated for that position, being too sympathetic for the outsiders and too cool for the insiders. This is our problematic stance as Mormon writers. In 1875, when Tullidge was in New York City engaged in publishing his book, *Life of Brigham Young*,²¹ he was described in the newspapers as "a man of talent and ability" who was "under the spiritual control of Joseph Smith."²² He was too close to Mormonism to be considered reliable.

Yet the *Millennial Star* took him to task for his outsider ways. The *Star* dismissed Tullidge's accounts of the lives of Brigham Young and Joseph Smith and *The Women of Mormondom* as lacking in authority. The

19. Tullidge to Smith, 18 January 1875.

20. Eliza R. Snow to ?, 7 October 1878, published in *Millennial Star*, 18 November 1878.

21. Edward W. Tullidge, *Life of Brigham Young: or, Utah and Her Founders* (New York: 1876).

22. *Woman's Exponent*, 4 (15 August 1875): 45.

Star proclaimed that all books dealing with doctrine, ordinances, and history should be issued under official church authority. In the book on Young, Tullidge wrote in the preface, "I have been, for many years, an apostate, and cannot be justly charged with a spirit of Mormon propaganda."²³ He assured President John Taylor, who called him on the statement, that he was not an apostate, that the statement had been removed from the latest edition, and that he supposed it had only been included "with the expectation that it would make the book sell better in the East." President Taylor summed up, "Then, when in the East, you are an apostate, because it is expected your book will sell better, and here you are a Saint, because to be a Saint pays better."²⁴ Tullidge repudiated the remark, but the exchange frames an important issue for writers who are Mormons and who tell the Mormon story. Writing for both audiences is a daunting effort, one for which we may well be dismissed by those on both sides of the gulf. However, I think we should all aspire to this position. Mormons must move beyond writing for themselves to writing for a wider audience, as Tullidge attempted to do.

Second, Tullidge places Mormons in history. He sees their saga within a long line of human activities. Mormons are often seen as an aberration, not part of the American sweep, or the grand human sweep, or anything significant. Tullidge puts the church and individuals within a continuum. Church members are "the sons and daughters of the Pilgrim sires and mothers who founded this nation; sons and daughters of the patriots who fought the battles of independence and won for these United States a transcendent destiny." The Mormon pioneers descend from seventeenth-century Europeans who had been pioneering for the past 250 years. The Huntington girls, Zina and Prescindia, he is delighted to tell us, are the grand-nieces of Samuel Huntington, signer of the Declaration of Independence, governor of Connecticut, and president of Congress. Lorenzo Snow's wife Harriet was born of Mayflower descendants. All this is tedious and repetitious, except for Tullidge's aim. He makes the pioneering story, the story of repeated exile, into the Mormon story. Mormons are the most worthy descendants of Pilgrim fathers and mothers.²⁵ He ennobles Mormon women as the natural successors to honored American predecessors.

Third, he places the Mormon story in literature, utilizing the genre of the romance. He notes that "the divine romance of the sisterhood best opens at Kirtland." He later says, "Presently we shall see that the romance of Mormonism has centred [sic] around the sisters abroad as well

23. Tullidge, *Life of Brigham Young*, preface.

24. *Millennial Star*, 18 November 1878.

25. Tullidge, *Women of Mormondom*, 201, 27, 201–34, 438, 204.

as at home."²⁶ This interesting phrase, "the romance of Mormonism," re-frames the Mormon story, usually told as devotion, bravery, and sacrifice. A romance, according to the *American College Dictionary*, is "A tale depicting heroic or marvelous achievements, colorful events or scenes, chivalrous devotion, unusual, even supernatural, experiences or other matters of a kind to appeal to the imagination."²⁷ Tullidge writes this stylized story, with allegories of good and evil, a heroic, colorful, supernatural story. He shows interaction between humans and immortals, adventures with heroes and demons, elevating women to magical creatures. Women are attuned and mystical, more sensitive and effective than the men, the first to see the possibilities of the great spiritual work of the age. This romantic view casts a bright light on women. Summing up these preliminary strategies, we see that Tullidge writes for a wide audience, puts Mormonism into history, and tells it literarily.

This female story, paralleling and intersecting the traditional male authoritarian story, makes women's world and sisterhood, the family as mother and children, central, not peripheral. Tullidge's purpose is to counter Fannie Stenhouse's blasphemy against her sisters, taking her on obliquely, rather than directly.

Tullidge continually asserts in *Women of Mormondom* that women are more mystical and spiritual than men. This familiar idea, still given lip-service today, probably did not originate with Tullidge, but let us consider his analysis. He sets up the mystical, spiritual world of Mormon women by noting that many people in Smith's time were receiving the administration of angels: "Thousands both in America and Great Britain" recorded visions and intuitions. They had manifestations of elders who would bring them the gospel. Mary Ann Whitney heard the voice of an angel from a cloud (45). Tullidge establishes that signs follow the believers, and details such signs as the reading of revelations from hands held up as a book, where "letters of light and letters of gold" writing appeared to their vision, on the hands of these "mediums" (56-57).

Not content to make women equal receivers of gifts, Tullidge makes them superior. The best receivers, he tells us, were among the sisters. "In modern spiritual parlance," they were more "inspirational." The sisters have always been the "best mediums." Tullidge further notes that the "gift of tongues" has been markedly the woman's gift (55-57, 475).

Tullidge's style was to make grand generalizations and illustrate them with homely examples. He says of the Kirtland temple that the apostles and elders laid the stone foundations, built up the arches, and put on the capstone. "But it was woman that did the 'inner work of the

26. Ibid., 26, 215.

27. *The American College Dictionary*, 10th ed., 1956, s.v. "romance."

temple.' " What is this inner work? The women sewed the veils of the temple. He moves to "Joseph's instinctive appreciation of woman and her mission. Her place was *inside* the temple, and he was about to put her there" (76). Tullidge generalizes in extravagant style:

Once again woman had become an oracle of a new dispensation and a new civilization. She can only properly be this when a temple economy comes round in the unfolding of the ages. She can only be a legitimate oracle *in the temple*.

When she dares to play the oracle, without her divine mission and anointing, she is accounted in society as a witch, a fortune-teller, a medium, who divines for hire and sells the gift of the invisibles for money.

But in the temple woman is a sacred and sublime oracle. She is prophetess and a high priestess. Inside the temple she cannot but be as near the invisibles as man—nearer indeed, from her finer nature, inside the mystic veil, the emblems of which she has worked upon with her own hands.²⁸

The temple interprets and protects woman. Her strong powers, which would be ridiculed in the greater world, are suited for temple work. There she is not only at home, but she is also superior. Her great gifts not only suit her for finer work, they unsuit her for ordinary life. In a temple, she "is the medium of Jehovah" (78).

Through Eliza R. Snow, Tullidge tells of fast-and-testimony meetings in the Kirtland temple each first Thursday. Spiritual gifts outpoured, especially healings and tongues. On fast days, according to Snow, the veils which intersected at right angles, divided the house into four parts. Each section had a leader, and a meeting in English, "lest a spirit of enthusiasm should creep in." At 4 p.m., the veils were drawn up and the congregations joined. For an hour the people could "speak or sing in tongues, prophesy, pray, interpret tongues, exhort or preach," as they wished (100-101). The united faith brought the saints into closer fellowship, but Snow noted the presence and the dangers of two powers, and that when using the good power, people were more open to its opposite.

Because of these two powers, the manifestations became known as "fire that could burn as well as bless." Fearing a confrontation between the two great forces, the Saints began to shy away from visions, angels, prophesy and "speaking in tongues." Consequently, the sisters, who ever are the "best mediums" of spiritual gifts in the church, have, in latter years, been shorn of their glory (58). The danger of the opposing forces explains the loss of, or at least the hiding of, female spiritual power.

If the spiritual gifts sound foreign and distant, Tullidge's argument that Mormon women are Hebraic, is equally difficult. All things work

28. Tullidge, *Women of Mormondom*, 76-77.

together for Tullidge. Kirtland, he says, "is the place where this Israelitish drama of our times commenced its first distinguishing scenes,—the place where the first Mormon temple was built." The restoration was of the Old Testament gospel, much more than the New. Woman had been central and valued in old days, he suggests, and after she had fallen in the eyes of other religions, Joseph Smith restored her place. Woman, according to Tullidge, "was among the morning stars, when they sang together for joy, at the laying of the foundations of the earth." "The Mormon prophet rectified the divine drama," he goes on to say. "Man is nowhere where woman is not. Mormonism has restored woman to her pinnacle" (26, 177).

Eliza R. Snow, he notes, was "deeply interested in the study of the ancient prophets," "a prophetess in her very nature" (63):

Her gifts are of race quality rather than of mere religious training or growth. They have come down to her from the ages. From her personal race indications, as well as from the whole tenor and mission of her life, she would readily be pronounced to be of Hebrew origin. One might very well fancy her to be a descendant of David himself; indeed the Prophet Joseph, in blessing her, pronounced her to be a daughter of Judah's royal house.²⁹

This extravagant praise for the New England spinster, converted from Alexander Campbell's Disciples of Christ, sounds odd indeed. What is Tullidge getting at?

He further equates Sidney Rigdon with a "voice crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord!" He says that Joseph is the sign of "Messiah's coming," that he came in "the spirit and power of Elijah," to "restore the covenant to Israel" (36). Tullidge rewrites Mormon history in the style of the Old Testament. He makes Mormonism part of a long religious story, a retelling of the Hebraic story of God working with his people.

Tullidge sees a "Latter-day Israel." "The women," he says, did their full half in founding Mormondom. They comprehended, "as much as did their prototypes who came up out of Egypt, the significance of the name of Israel." "Out of Egypt the seed of promise, [came] to become a peculiar people, a holy nation, with a distinctive God and a distinctive destiny." "A Mormon Iliad in every view; and the sisters understanding it fully. Indeed perhaps they have best understood it." "Mormondom is no Christian sect, but an Israelitish nationality," he intones. "All America is the world's New Jerusalem!" (68, 71, 75). Mormon Israel acts out the Hebrew drama: Abraham leaves his father's house, heading to a promised

29. Ibid., 31–32.

land where he will found a great nation. In thee, he is told, shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Tullidge's direction now becomes clear. He sees Mormons, the spiritual sons and daughters of Abraham and Sarah, gathering to fulfill the familial promise. "A host of the daughters of New England—earnest and purest of women—many of them unmarried, and most of them in the bloom of womanhood—gathered to the virgin West to become the mothers of a nation" (73). They would then begin patriarchal marriage. So in the end, the book justifies polygamy. Why was I surprised? I should have seen it coming.

Tullidge concedes that the woman's lot is difficult. "Comprehend this Hebraic religion of the sisters, and it can thus be comprehended somewhat how they have borne the cross of polygamy, with more than the courage of martyrs at the stake" (185). Yet plural marriage nonetheless exalts women in Israel. After Bathsheba married George Albert Smith in 1841, they visited his family for a feast. John Smith, the groom's father, drank a toast to the newlyweds, "pronouncing the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob upon [them]." The bride notes, "I did not understand the import of this blessing as well then as I do now" (155).

Tullidge notes that Anglo Saxons, the last race anyone would expect to go for plural marriage, had reestablished it. "Hence, they have lifted it to a plane that, perhaps, no other race could have done—above mere sexual considerations, and, in its theories, altogether incompatible with the serfdom of women." He quotes Eliza R. Snow's curious defense of the practice at the Mass Meeting of 1870. She abjures the idea that Mormon women are slaves. The women of the church have "performed and suffered what could never have been borne and accomplished by slaves" (379, 391).

Tullidge asserts that Israelitish Mormondom fully understands "the Abrahamic subject," while gentile Christendom never has. He sees Mormons closer to the ancient patriarchs than to Nephi and Mormon whose civilization is now extinct. He notes that Snow, "a prophetess and high priestess of Hebraic Mormondom," traveled to Jerusalem and stood on the Mount of Olives, raising her "inspired voice to swell the divine command for Israel to gather" (480–81).

The idea then, that Mormonism is Hebraic, a restoration of Hebrew Bible culture, has, according to Tullidge, confirmed the necessity of accepting plural marriage, a practice not very successful originally. This model has caused Mormon women to accept, even welcome, sacrifice they could never have been forced to bear, promising numerous offspring and familial blessings.

A final idea is Tullidge's creation of a female theology. He names a "holy female trinity," of Eve, Sarah, and Zion—mothers in Israel at different times in history. Motherhood is the Mormon woman's everlasting

theme. Eve is the Mother of a world, Sarah the mother of the covenant, and Zion (a group name for polygamous wives) the mother of celestial sons and daughters.

Eve is the first. God commanded Eve to be fruitful: "Thus opened creation, and the womb of everlasting motherhood throbbed with divine ecstasy." Tullidge credits Eve for breaking one commandment to fulfill another. The Mormon daughters of Eve must also break the rules to "magnify the divine office of motherhood" (197–200). Mormon woman is Eve in the creation and fall, and Sarah in the covenant.

Sarah, the Old Testament wife of Abraham, incarnates the "very soul of patriarchal marriage," who gave her husband another wife in order to fulfill his covenant with the Lord. Tullidge emphasizes the extent of Sarah's sacrifice and the pain which both Sarah and Hagar suffered. Yet Tullidge reminds us that races and empires came of them. "From the courts above the Mormon woman shall look down upon an endless posterity" (532, 535–36).

Zion personifies the woman of Tullidge's time. In his most mystical and opaque language, Tullidge expatiates on scriptures, concluding that each Mormon woman can be Zion if she is obedient. Then, "Creation begins again! Zion—the New Jerusalem—is the Lamb's bride. She is the coming Eve" (546–47). As Tullidge has placed the Mormon story in history, so also he places the polygamous woman into the continuum of Biblical history. He justifies Mormondom's strange marital practices by showing the progression from Eve and Sarah.

What then can we say about this mostly forgotten book? Tullidge, writing to make some money and to defend the early church, casts a bright light on the women of the 1870s. He sees them as potent, powerful creatures, willing to suffer for their beliefs. His defensive aims raise polygamy, this most criticized practice, to the central one in the church. As a response to Stenhouse, Tullidge's polygamy theme is transcendent. Yet men are entirely left out; this is woman's choice. "The women of Mormondom, and the marriage question! Two of the greatest sensations of the age united!" "Marriage is the great question of the age. It is the woman's special subject," he noted in 1877 (496). How can Christendom hold the Bible divine and infallible, yet not follow it? "The Mormons and the Bible," he asserts, "stand or fall together" (497).

Because of the close collaboration with Eliza R. Snow, there can be no question that this is the story LDS women wanted told. Snow, who worked extensively on the manuscript, also saw herself as the Hebraic high priestess. The Relief Society women told their own stories to illustrate their devotion to the principle they lived. If Tullidge edited their work, as he was bound to do, he did not change its meaning. He was writing to please the sisters.

He also promised them rewards: They would be redeemed from

Eve's curse. They would no longer bring forth their children in sorrow, nor would their husbands rule over them. "Woman will be redeemed from that curse, as sure as the coming of to-morrow's sun. No more, after this generation, shall civilized man *rule* over his mate, but 'they twain shall be one;' and the sisters are looking for that millennial day" (506).

Reading this book brings back whiffs of the nineteenth century, the flavors of Mormon woman's lot: her oppression, her sacrifice, her obedience, her glorification. Better than any of his contemporaries, Tullidge brings Mormon women to life, puts them into history, connects them to a past. Tullidge recreates the mystical and magical world of Utah's early female Zion, a world we frequently prefer to forget. Revisiting it does not mean that we have to relive it. For all his eccentricities and vacillations, Tullidge was a man of vision who still has something to say to us.