

I ever heard from any creature and I have read and heard much and reflected much, because our institution of marriage has invited discussion and reflection upon this subject. I have never yet heard an argument that, to my mind, appeared sound against the marriage of an honorable man to two women any more than to one. And the only argument that has ever been presented that has had a semblance of soundness is the generally admitted fact of the near equality of the sexes which would seem to foreshadow the general purpose and design of providence that one man should have only one wife. I have never heard an argument relating to the physical effects of the institution, nor as relating to the state of society that could not be applied just as appropriately to monogamy. The opposers of plural marriage make many declarations against us which are untrue, which they do not understand because they accept the reports of certain persons who give way to a lying spirit, and misrepresent and belie people far better than themselves. The selfishness and weakness of human nature, the evils which manifest themselves from time to time between families and between husband and wife, and between wives and children are quoted as evils greatly to be deplored as growing out of this system. I will only say in regard to this, that those best acquainted with the intact workings of the system among the Latter-day Saints throughout all of their settlements, if they testify honestly and truthfully as to the result of their careful observations extending over a period of over thirty years—the time that this system of plural marriage has been practiced by us in these mountains, they would, in effect, say, that there

is less discontent, less strife and fewer family broils and less divorce, and less casting off wives and casting upon the community of children without care, than would be found in the same number of monogamic families. And I may here say, that statistics will bear me out in making this assertion. To those who are not posted in the matter this may appear incredible; and the majority of the Christian world would think it impossible judging from their standpoint; and what they see and hear among themselves, and judging by the spirit by which they are animated, they would, I admit, pronounce this a thing impossible. But it is simply because they are not imbued with the faith of the Latter-day Saints, and this being the case they cannot understand the motives that prompt us to enter into this relationship. They cannot comprehend the spirit that governs us, the devout Godfearing spirit of self-sacrifice which leads us onward to all that is noble, forbearing and long-suffering, that teaches us to love one another and to be charitable to all men, and which teaches us that the relationships which we make through the marriage covenant are but the foundation of eternal glory and exaltation in the worlds to come; and it also teaches us that the glories of the future that open up before us are greatly dependent upon the faithfulness of our relationships and associations in this life; and that a man must be found capable to properly govern and guide his family and preserve in time the wives and children that are given to him, leading them in the way of life and salvation, and rearing his children in all that is pure and praiseworthy, so that he can receive them in the morning of the first resurrection,