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History Of Louisa Barnes Pratt

S. George Ellsworth

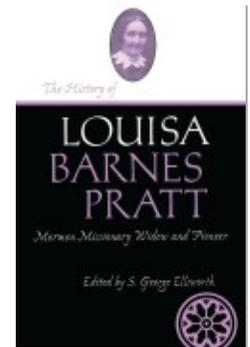
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Written at Tubuai, Society Islands, February 1852

My dear daughters,

Being now in my fiftieth year and having passed a life of deep experience in the changes and fortunes to which life's nature is always liable, and being in circumstances that afford me much leisure, I have resolved to make a record of the leading incidents of a career in a world where good and ill have been always contained. The reason which urges me most to this undertaking is I have been many years separated from my mother, whom I loved with a pure heartfelt devotion and her memory I this day revere no less than the spirit palpitating in my veins. Often when mourning that separation have I wished, O! how ardently, that she had bequeathed to me her own biography! With what enthusiasm should I, in my hours of solitude and sorrow, have poured over its pages, how eagerly drank in her sentiments which I ever considered faultless! I should have rejoiced and mourned with her alternately as she swam the stream of life smoothly, or buried beneath its stormy waves, she struggled for existence. All I have of her writings are a few letters addressed to me during an absence from home; these I esteem of great value.

And now, judging of the feelings of my daughters from my own for my parents, I am determined to leave for their satisfaction a portion of my history. I shall aim at nothing more than the simple relation of facts; and such circumstances as I have not the most vivid recollection of, I will not attempt to describe. I shall commence with my earliest remembrances, presuming that nothing that has ever befallen me, will be without interest to my children, and even their successors. And now my children, over whose welfare I have watched with the most sanguine hope, may you ever adhere to the principles of truth and love. Accept this as a tribute of my deep affection for you. Remember my weaknesses only to avoid them in yourselves, nor call that imperfection, which persons more wise than you may denominate wisdom. Treasure up in your hearts

and practice in your lives the instructions I have given you. And be assured that not a sentence midst all my counsels has been uttered but with the purest desires for your happiness. Never talk of the faults of your parents, as it will serve to lessen the respect and reverence you should cherish for their admonitions. Cultivate your love and unvarying friendships for each other, and in a special manner for your own offspring, as also a spirit of tenderness and of patience. Avoid as much as possible all manifestation of irritable temper before the younger members of the household, as it will be a great disadvantage and increase your toil in the forming of their minds.

These remarks and sentiments may result in much good to you, when my tongue and pen are silent. Remember the unfavorable circumstances against which I labored in rearing you, and should your own be more propitious, be thankful and fail not to improve them. Remember the trust your mother reposed in her God. Be ye faithful in keeping His commandments; dominions, principalities, and powers, shall be thine! Farewell! and may you live to see much of the salvation of God, and the gathering of Israel, yea even the winding up scene: the coming of our Lord and Savior, and the redemption of Zion. These are the earnest desires of your ever faithful and affectionate mother—

Louisa B. Pratt