

## THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY

Bowles nodded gravely and waited for him to go on. It was a month since Brigham had spoken of his girl, and he had never discussed the affair since that first rush of confidences, until now suddenly he dived into the midst of it.

"No," continued Brig, gazing mournfully at his dead cigarette; "Dix is all right, but she don't know them Mormons like I do. She don't know what they're liable to do. This feller that's tryin' to marry my girl is the bishop's own son—he's that feller I beat up so bad when I took to the hills a while back—and he's bound to do me dirt. My girl won't marry me, nohow—not lessen I become a Mormon—and shore as you're settin' there, boy, if I take that gal from the bishop's son, I'm elected to go on a mission!

"I know it! Hain't the old man got it in fer me? And then what's to become of my wife? Am I goin' to leave her fer two years and that dastard a-hangin' around? Not on yore life—if they summoned me fer a mission, I'd either take my wife along or I'd kill that bishop's son—one or the other. But that's the worst of it—the bishop's kid is on the spot, and I'm hidin' out like a coyote. My girl keeps a-writin' like she never gets no letters, and beggin' me to come back and be good! But I can't do it—that's all—I been a renegade too long."