

## PLURAL MARRIAGE.

TREATED CHIEFLY FROM AN HISTORICAL STANDPOINT.

[From the Utah Journal.]

Prominent ministers, conscientious men and consistent bible believers of different denominations, have frequently considered and expressed themselves freely upon the subject of polygamy when it had no connection with the Mormons or Mormonism. Martin Luther, in a sermon preached at Wittemberg for the reformation of marriage in the year 1522, encouraged polygamy, knowing that a system of marriage that would admit of irriage for every woman would do much towards purifying the morality of the age and help women to rise above those circumstances that tended to make them an easy prey to the polluting touch of the libertine. Luther says: "If they are stubborn, it is fitting their husbands should tell them, if you will not another will; if the mistress refuses to come let the maid be called." The preaching and influence of Luther, Melancthon and many other eminent reformers took root and bore fruit, though all the tendencies of the age were against marriage and especially against plural marriage, and even preferred harlotry as does our own monogamic civilization of the nineteenth century. Those great reformers accomplished much for the age in which they lived; they encouraged thought and investigation, increased liberties of the people, established the right of their ministers to marry and permitted the divine institution of polygamy to exist in the Christian Church. Philip Landgrave, of Hesse, one of the principal Lords and Princes of Germany wrote Luther and the heads of the reformation asking their consent for him to marry a second wife while his first wife, his princess, was still living, who had also given her consent in the matter. Many arguments were used by Philip to show that polygamy was in accordance with the Bible. Upon the receipt of Philip's letter, Luther called a council of the principal ministers of the reformation to consider the propriety of granting the Landgrave's request. At the close of the council a long letter was written Philip granting his request and exhorting him to live a virtuous and upright life as became a Christian and true follower of Christ. Commencing at the 21st paragraph we read as follows:

"But after all, if your highness is fully resolved to marry a second wife, we judge it ought to be done secretly, as we have said with respect to the dispensation of the demand on the same account, that is, that none but the person you shall wed, and a few trusty persons, know of the matter, and they, too, obliged to secrecy under the seal of confession. Hence no contradiction nor scandal of moment need be apprehended; for it is no extraordinary thing for Princes to keep concubines; and though the vulgar should be scandalized thereat, the more intelligent would doubt of the truth, and prudent persons would approve of this moderate kind of life, preferable to adultery and other brutal actions. There is no need of being much concerned for what men will say, provided all goes right with conscience. So far do we approve it and in those circumstances only by us specified; for the Gospel hath neither recalled nor forbid what was permitted in the law of Moses with respect to marriage. Jesus Christ has not changed the external economy, but added justice only, and life everlasting for reward. He teaches the true way of obeying God, and endeavors to repair the corruption of nature.

Your Highness hath therefore, in this writing, not only the approbation of us all in case of necessity, concerning what you desire, but also the reflections we have made thereupon; we beseech you to weigh them as becoming a virtuous, wise and Christian Prince. We also beg of God to direct all for His glory and your Highness' salvation.

Given at Wittemberg the Wednesday after the feast of St. Nicholas, 1529.

[Signed] MARTIN LUTHER,  
PHILIP MELANCTON,  
MARTIN BUCER,  
ANTONY CORVIN ADAM,  
JOHN LEVIGUE,  
JUSTUS WINTERTE,RE,  
DENNIS MELANCTON."

Ministers of this century who claim the great reformers, who signed the foregoing letter, as their prototypes and as the beacon lights along the shores of the sixteenth century and the founders of religious liberty now enjoyed by dissenting Christians, wax eloquent against the Mormons and polygamy, while their tongues are silent as death in relation to harlotry and the vilest sexual corruptions festering in their own neighborhood. They are like rivulets that become rivers and swell into oceans. They grow to be the damning sins of the age; corrupt life's issues and curse the race with the foulest diseases. O, ye degenerate representatives of Luther, Melancthon and the noble reformers who have honestly sought to reform and elevate mankind and lead them back to nature and to God? Why do ye condemn polygamy and the practices of prophets and patriarchs whom (if the Bible be true) God approved, blessed and honored. How can you be silent on prostitution and tacitly allow it to exist under the disguised name of "necessary evil" when it is thriving around your very homes and has already become a great

curse in the cities you inhabit, gathering in its folds the innocent and most beautiful women in the land and dragging them down to premature death and to fill a dishonored grave. If ye are what ye claim to be: watchmen on the towers of Zion and guardians of the people's morals and raise not your voice against the damning sins of the age, how will ye answer God in the day of judgment? Hear what David O. Allen says, the celebrated Christian missionary of 25 years in India in his book published as late as 1856: "Supposing now that any Hindoo, or Mohammedan, or Jew, who has several wives to whom he has been legally married, should give evidence of piety and wish to make a public profession of Christianity, what shall be done in respect to his polygamy? In contracting these marriages he violates no laws of the country and no laws of God, as he understood them any more than Jacob and Elkanah did in marrying two wives or than David did in marrying a yet larger number. This man cannot divorce any of his wives, if he would; and it would be great injustice and cruelty to them and their children if he should. He cannot annul his legal obligations to provide for them. He is bound, morally and legally, to support them while professing Hindoo, Mohammedan or Jewish religion, and his having become a Christian, and embraced a purer faith, will not release him from these obligations, in view of the English government and courts or of the native population. Should he put them away, or all but one, they will still be legally his wives, and cannot be married to any other man. And further, they have done nothing to deserve such unkindness, cruelty and disgrace at his hands.

In a speech of the Hon. J. G. Blair, of Missouri, in the House of Representatives, Feb. 17, 1872, we find the following language used: "Marriage being of divine origin, and the contract of marriage originating in a state of nature, we must go to the earliest and most ancient histories to learn what it is. Mr. Speaker, in a state of nature we find it monogamous and polygamous. Upon almost every page of the old Bible we find polygamy written. Not only so, the Bible gives us marriage in a more detestable form, by a hundredfold, than in Utah. Utah has its polygamy; the Bible its polygamy and concubinage. By tradition marriage, in a state of nature, has been polygamous, and continues so to this day. By divine law we find it commencing with Lamech, 3,875 year before Christ, and conceding, for the sake of argument, that it ceased in the days of the Apostles, it covered a space of 3,925 years, by the express approval of God.

Now, sir, I am prepared to submit a proposition to Christians and students of moral philosophy: "If it be true that moral principles never change and that marriage is based on moral principles, and that if it be true that polygamous marriages existed for 3,925 years or a less period by the approval of God, is polygamy morally right or wrong?" But polygamy traces itself further down than that. While we have no express account of it in the New Testament, it is equally true that we have no express prohibition of it therein. In this opinion I am not only sustained by many divines but by the author of the New American Encyclopedia. He says in volume thirteen, page 405, in speaking of polygamy, "There are no positive injunctions in the Bible against the practice."

Mr. Speaker, between 1852 and 1856, a number of ministers of the Gospel, sent as missionaries to India, and belonging to the Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, assembled in Calcutta in convention and declared that polygamous marriages were not contrary to divine laws. (D. O. Allen on India, page 601.)

If a convention of Baptist, Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in Calcutta, have declared that polygamous marriages were not contrary to divine law, why do the ministers of these same denominations in America denounce it as being both against the law of God and the law of man, and indeed their effort and influence have obtained what man-made laws now exist against polygamy in this nation. They have adopted polygamy as their war cry against the Mormons, and they produce it in a long, loud wail every time they ask Congress to pass special legislation against them. What a striking difference between these ministers of this nineteenth century and the prophets and ministers who through God were the authors of the Bible. The former believed in and practiced polygamy, but denounced harlotry and punished it with death, and the latter (while pretending to believe in and to be guided by this same Bible,) denounce polygamy two thousand miles away from them while they have no word of reproof for harlots and houses of ill-fame found in the cities and neighborhoods in which they live. Bible considerations alone should be sufficient to prevent all believers in it from persecuting the Mormons on account of polygamy; and the clause in the Constitution guaranteeing every individual that forms an integral part of this nation the free exercise of his religion, and forbidding Congress to make any law that would interfere with his right of any individual or community should be sufficient cause to hinder any citizen from persecuting another on account of religious differences. If a man believes that it is best for him to be without a wife let him remain single. If a man believes that he ought to marry one or

more wives, providing he can find women that are like minded, it is nobody's business. The Constitution says that "life and the pursuit of happiness are free to all." Every man and every woman has the right to choose his or her own path if no one else be injured in that choice. To hinder them would be to rob them of a constitutional right. In some countries in Europe statistics show only about one marriageable woman in three that is married, and even in polygamic countries they do not all find opportunities to marry. Notwithstanding all the polygamy that exists in Utah in the older settlements, hundreds of women who have been marriageable for years still remain single. Polygamic countries have less prostitution and less sexual diseases than the monogamic. The Latter-day Saints believe that polygamy will make them physically and morally pure in this life and give them greater glory in the life to come. There is not a people on earth more free from sexual sins than the Latter-day Saints are, or that live nearer the principles that governed the intercourse of the sexes in ancient Israel when God led them by His own voice. The faith has sunk deep into the hearts of the Saints that the man or woman that is guilty of sexual intercourse outside the marriage relation is worthy of death. All are required by their religion to keep their private record pure and unspotted.

In addition to the constitutional reasons for non-interference with the Mormons in pursuing their religious convictions there is still another that ought to settle the matter. When the Saints came to Utah this was Mexican soil. The United States afterwards took it by conquest and entered into a treaty with Mexico which fully covers the whole ground and is binding upon Congress, upon the courts and upon every citizen of the United States to respect it.

Hon. J. G. Blair, speaking of this treaty, said: "Mr. Speaker, there is another point in connection with this subject which I shall now notice, and which aside from every other consideration, in my opinion settles this matter forever. In section one, article nine, of our treaty with Mexico, we expressly stipulated that the people upon the ceded territory should be 'protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property and secured in the free exercise of their religion without restrictions.' (U. S. Statutes at large, page 930. The treaty says the Mormons shall be secure in the free exercise of 'their religion.' I emphasize the expression 'their religion;' and not only that, but that treaty says they shall be protected in the free exercise thereof 'without restriction.' Webster defines religion to be 'any system of faith and worship; as the religion of the Turks, of Hindoos, of Christians; true or false religion.' Webster is considered to be the highest authority on language in the United States and if his definition of the term religion be correct Congress has gone far beyond its bounds and authority in passing the law of 1862, against the Mormons, on account of polygamy, and in doing so they violated not only the Constitution that every member thereof has sworn to support, but they also violated the positive terms in section one, article nine of the treaty with Mexico. Do not Edmunds and his colleagues know this? If they do not they are not fit to be senators, and if they have knowingly trampled on the Constitution and violated the treaty with Mexico, to gratify a desire to join in a religious persecution against the Mormons, they are still less fit for their positions, and history will record their names with the infamous Jeffreys, and the merciless persecutors of the brave men who suffered and perished at the stake for the cause of the reformation, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. History and experience prove that lust of power and religious intolerance overstep all bounds of prudence. Constitutions and treaties form no barriers to religious brokts, and their cruel and inhuman deeds, when, on the wheels of fortune, they happen to ride into power. But eternal justice follows with unerring tread the path of the tyrant that only wants the power to rob his brother man of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

ENDYMION.

## "MORMON" WOMEN IN WASHINGTON.

From the National Republican of Washington.

SEEKING REDRESS FOR WRONGS—  
CORRECTING EVIL AND SENSATIONAL REPORTS ABOUT  
MORMONDOM.

It is known to comparatively few people, perhaps, that there is a commission of Mormon women from Utah in the city. They seek redress for wrongs, in the names of over 2,000 ladies who assembled at Salt Lake City in mass meeting, March 6, 1886, representing the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of the whole Territory. A Republican representative met the commission by appointment at the headquarters on Grant Place yesterday afternoon, and confronted four well-favored, agreeable and intelligent women. Mrs. Emmeline B. Wells, the editor of the *Woman's Exponent*, published semi-monthly at Salt Lake City,

seemed by common consent to be the chairman. Mrs. Wells is the plural wife of Gen. D. H. Wells, who was counselor to Brigham Young. Mrs. Wells was born a Puritan in Massachusetts, but was converted with her mother and went to Nauvoo, Ill., in 1844, and was married in Salt Lake City in 1852. Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson was born in Cambridge, England; was married in London, and came to this country in 1860, and went to Salt Lake in 1875, in consequence of embracing the Mormon faith in Illinois. Her husband died in 1880, and both were Mormons, but were never in polygamy. Mrs. Emily S. Richards and Mrs. Josephine R. West were born in the Mormon Church of parents who lived in polygamy. They and their husbands are all Mormons but do not practice polygamy. They are young women, having each been married several years, and have had numerous children, and Mrs. West has an infant with her.

In answer to a question concerning their mission to the capital Mrs. Wells said:

"Our mission to Washington at this present time is to present memorials which we brought ourselves, being properly accredited, for the President, the Senate and the House. The first was delivered to the Chief Magistrate on April 3d, when we had an interview with him; that to the Senate was presented by Mr. Blair on the 6th. He was selected because he voted against the Edmunds bill, and is besides a woman suffragist, and ex-Gov. Long, of Massachusetts, who is a suffragist also, has charge of the document for the House, which has not yet been referred to the judiciary committee. In the Senate the memorial was allowed to lie on the table, and appeared in full in the *Record* of April 7th."

"Having presented your memorial, what do you propose to do further in the matter?"

"We shall do all in our power to correct the evil and sensational reports that are being daily disseminated among the people of the east from the pulpit and by the press. We have some books and pamphlets which we will gladly give to inquirers, and we invite investigation, and are ready to answer questions."

"What is the condition of affairs in Utah that compels you to make this protest?"

"The Edmunds law, which was passed in 1882," said Dr. Ferguson, with a view of prohibiting and doing away with polygamy, has been the means of inflicting much suffering upon the people who do not come within the penal scope of the law, through the maladministration of officials. As will be seen from our memorial we complain that young children are brought into court and pled with indelicate questions; tender women in delicate health are asked impertinent and insulting questions in court, and many of the leading men and priests of Mormonism are driven into hiding by the exactions of the officials. The juries are composed of men known to be antagonistic to Mormonism, and no Mormon is permitted to sit upon juries. The men and women living in polygamous marriage have been disenfranchised, but monogamous Mormons, men and women, still vote. It is not true that the women vote at the dictation of Mormon officials. The ballot is secret and no one has any means of knowing how another votes. The Gentile riot in Utah," continued Dr. Ferguson, "is not making a crusade against polygamy, but is agitating matters and moving for adverse legislation in order to get the local and elective offices of the territory under their control. The elective and territorial offices are now all held by Mormons. Should the ring succeed in disfranchising monogamous Mormons, although greatly in the minority, they would manipulate territorial affairs to suit themselves. All we can do to foil the political conspirators is to enlighten public sentiment on all that pertains to Mormons and Mormonism."

In reply to a question as to what made the Church of the Latter-day Saints so fascinating to women, Mrs. Wells resumed, "We feel that the doctrines are the truth, and feel like clinging to them at any sacrifice. I know there is more liberty for women in the Mormon Church than in any other in the world. The women vote not only upon all political questions, but upon religious tenets as well. We believe in a pre-existence and future state of progression, and the discipline of plural wives is a corrective to supreme selfishness. The great wrong Congress is doing in enforcing the Edmunds law is the breaking up of families, the ruin of hearts and homes, and disgracing the women and making their children outcasts.

"Mormons believe that a man can love more than one woman just as a mother's love is not confined to one child," said Mrs. Richards. "My husband and I talked the matter all over before marriage. We both came from parents who lived in polygamy, but we were the children of the first wives and no Mormon youth would marry a girl who was not a good Mormon in all that the word implies. We were born and brought up in the church, and when we arrived at years of responsibility we adopted the faith as our own. We have seen the power given the Saints; that the Lord prospered them in temporal things as well as in spiritual things."

Mrs. West is the daughter of an apostle of the church, and avers that if she had a score of children, would bring them all up to be Latter-day Saints. She is enthusiastic about the superior principles of her religion, and

says Mormons are not living for the present only, but for the glory of eternity, and are willing to make sacrifices here for the future exaltation.

Mr. F. S. Richards is in the city with his wife. He is attorney for the Mormon church and attorney for Salt Lake City, and is here to argue a case in the Supreme Court.

Mr. Joseph A. West is also here, with his wife. He is here on legislative business.

## THE NEW ZEALAND MISSION.

STATISTICS RELATING THERETO, ETC.

By courtesy of Brother F. D. Richards we are permitted to make the following extracts from a letter just received by him from President W. T. Stewart, of the New Zealand mission. It is dated Gisborn, March 12, 1886:

On the 8th ultimo we closed a most successful and enjoyable three days' Conference, which was well attended, having native representatives from all parts of the Island where we have branches except the Wairarapa.

The reports showed a very favorable condition of the various congregations or districts, and it was gratifying indeed to see the intelligence and understanding, and the great earnestness manifested by so many of our native Saints.

There were eleven of the Utah Elders present at the Conference, all enjoying good health excepting E. Cliff, who has not been robust since his arrival in this land; however he, together with the others, were enjoying themselves very much, and I believe that all or nearly all of the Elders here feel very thankful that their missionary field has fallen in this part of the world.

Our statistical report shows 23 Elders and 2 Sisters for Utah. Of the local Priesthood there are 34 Elders, 73 Priests, 43 Teachers and 21 Deacons, also 1,113 members, who, added to the 406 children under eight years of age, make 1,749 as a total number of souls at the last of January, and there have been enough added since to make the number up to 1,800. Three hundred and seventy-five were baptized and 130 blessed during the last six months; also 30 were excommunicated, and there were 18 deaths against 21 births. During the same period four persons emigrated; two Elders, were released, and five arrived. The European number about the same as before. We have one school, flourishing under the management of Sister Sears. Efforts in this direction are highly satisfactory. Our other sister is located in the Waikato, but it will likely be some time yet before they will have a school in operation there.

I made a trial effort at translating the Book of Mormon into Maori, having Elder Ezra F. Richards and a half caste (native Elder) as assistants, but I soon found that he was lacking in an understanding of English, as we were in Maori so that our work was not very satisfactory. It is impossible to procure any native educated in his own language as they have no schools here for that purpose. The native language itself is more or less deficient, and it will require a most thorough acquaintance with its idiomatic construction to enable a translator to convey the teachings of so important a work as the Book of Mormon in that forcible manner desired. It seems to me that by deferring its translation for a year or so it will insure a better translation, and, of course, the best that can be had is desired.

I understand that there are one or two who have joined the Church in the Waikato who are better acquainted with the English language than any we have here. So, when they have time to acquaint themselves with the principles of the Gospel they will be efficient helps in the work of translation.

The two Elders laboring in Southland and the one in Australia do not report much progress among the whites, and there are a few important sections of country inhabited by Maoris that do not seem as yet prepared for the Gospel, and one place where we meet very bitter opposition. Aside from this we all feel that the mission is in a very flourishing condition."

## LAND JUMPING.

A DESPICABLE BUSINESS FOR PERSONS  
PRETENDING TO BE LATTER-DAY  
SAINTS TO BE ENGAGED IN.

MORGAN COUNTY, May 5, 1886.

Editor Deseret News:

Believing a few lines penned to the News, giving a short sketch of the experience we are now gaining, might be of some benefit to other settlements that are situated about as we are, I send the following:

Nature has so arranged matters as to make our valley very narrow, with sloping hills on either side, which have hitherto provided us with a very good range for stock. When government had our land surveyed, we found in many instances that a few acres had been using, were in sections or quarter sections that lay entirely in the hills, and were of no value except for grazing purposes. The people being generally poor, thought they could not afford to purchase so much waste land in order to get the few acres that were good, until such times as they should be better prepared; and as no one would be likely to buy the hills in order to get their little piece of