

PECULIARITIES OF MOR-MONISM.

BY HENRY CROUSE, HOT SPRINGS, UTAH.

Written for Pomeroy's Democrat.

Your frank and manly letter, in reply to sundry inquiries, was received some time since. I thank you for the generous spirit you manifest in your letter in behalf of truth and justice, although I am forced to state that you made a slight mistake in speaking of the Mormon religion as being my religion. The fact is, I never had any definite religious belief which was not more or less intermingled with skeptical uncertainties, bordering very contiguously upon the domain of infidelity. Still I have always cherished a decided faith in that line of social conduct which is comprehended in the observance of the Golden Rule—the compressed law and gospel of Jesus Christ: "To do unto others as I would have others do unto me," under similar circumstances.

In your letter of November 15, 1877, you stated: "I would not connect the question of marriage in any way with the question of religion; at least till I could prove that God himself had a wife."

Now I disclaim being, or even wishing to be, a defender of religious dogmas, but as a well protected Gentile resident of Utah, and as a safely-conducted passenger over a bridge much evil spoken against, I cannot but humbly endeavor to give my experience and relate what I believe to be the truth. You stated: "It is the fundamental principle of my religion to respect the religion of every other person." This encourages me to believe that you will be pleased to accord to the other side of Mormonism a chance of being heard in the *Democrat*.

Although I am not competent to defend Mormonism as a divine institution, still from a conscientious feeling of duty to defend truth and justice I will write what experience and personal observation have taught me.

My sojourn in Utah during the past three years has convinced me that the Mormons believe that the "question of marriage" is inseparably "connected with their religion." They base their religious marriages—in fact all their marriages—upon the direct commands of their religious teachers, their religious books or instruction, ancient and modern, and also upon the direct revelation of the great Omniscient through his chosen modern revelator, seer and prophet.

The Mormons very pointedly contend that if God is now incapable of making known his living will to his household of faithful followers, then he was never otherwise than incapable, and that therefore the Old and New Testament records of the alleged revelations of God to man are also unreal. But a sincere and conscientious adherent of Mormonism confides as implicitly in the correctly translated precepts of the Bible as he does in the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. The Mormons claim for the institution of marriage a most pre-eminently sacred and exalted position. They connect it directly with the creation of man, God having himself solemnized the first marriage ceremony, in fact, married the first couple. It is recorded in the Bible to be the special will of God that all marriage covenants, entered into in unison with his omniscient decree, shall remain forever unbroken.

The Mormons do not force any man or woman to contract either monogamous or polygamous marriage, nor do they compel any person to be baptized, nor to repent of their sins. But they solemnly, and apparently with unfeigned solicitude, counsel each and every person—Jew, Gentile and Saint—to be obedient to all the requirements of the gospel. In this respect the Mormons claim to be consistent in their professed belief of conceding to each person the attribute of "free moral agency." Polygamy is one of the tenets of the Mormon church, but no more nor less compulsory than any other Mormon doctrine, but optionally obligatory.

The Mormons, and especially the high authorities of the Mormon Church, solemnly advise all adult members thereof to assume the duties and responsibilities of fatherhood and motherhood as early in life as is consistent with their physical capacities, and to make their

pecuniary circumstances yield to the requirements of their matrimonial occasions.

The Mormons believe also that God himself has many wives, by whom he begets our spiritual natures, or that part of us which is presumed to be deathless. Hence God is the assumed father of our spirits, and therefore, the professed Christian unconsciously and intuitively speaks of God as his Heavenly Father.

With the adherents of Mormonism it is a fundamental law of nature, that there can be no father inseparable from a mother. The Mormons believe that the same indispensable necessity exists for having a mother of our spiritual nature as that which necessitates a mother of our physical nature.

The Mormons believe that in the domain of spirits there are myriads of intelligent beings, all the God-begotten spiritual offspring of God, our Heavenly Father, who are unceasingly importuning, pleading and entreating us mortal creatures to use our most holy endeavors to invest them with fleshly tabernacles. This importunity the Mormons believe is effected by each non-embodied spirit influencing in its behalf the special guardian angel of each man and woman to generate for it a fleshly tabernacle in which it can grow and mature to the highest state of exaltation and glory and immortality in the realms of eternity.

The Mormons believe that these God-begotten spirits are incapable of progression unless they are invested with fleshly tabernacles; that they must first become mortal in order that they may become immortal.

This is the reason why the Mormons profess to feel in duty bound, impelled by the dictates of a conscientious belief, to contract marriage—honorable wedlock—both monogamous and polygamous, "solemnized by the sacred rites of a religious ceremony, in a holy, consecrated temple, dedicated to that express purpose by the Holy Priesthood," where the matrimonial candidates are married—"sealed" for all time and all eternity. The Mormons profess that their motive to enter into their plural marriage covenants is not to gratify the impulses of a carnal, sexual passion, but to procreate their fellow human species, to generate fleshly tabernacles for the millions of intelligent God-begotten spiritual beings—to respond to their holy, Heaven-born entreaties to help them to become mortal, that they may become immortal—to obey the primitive command of the Great Jehovah given to our first parents.

Rain.

The first water,—how much it means! Seven-tenths of man himself is water. Seven-tenths of the human race rained down but yesterday! It is much more probable that Caesar will flow out of a bung hole than that any part of his remains will ever stop one. Our life is indeed a vapor, a breath, a little moisture condensed upon the pane. We carry ourselves as in a phial. Cleave the flesh and how quickly we spill out! Man begins as a fish, and he swims in a sea of vital fluids as long as his life lasts. His first food is milk; so is his last and all between. He can taste and assimilate and absorb nothing but liquids. The same is true throughout all organic nature. 'Tis water power that makes every wheel move. Without this great solvent, there is no life. I admire immensely this line of Walt Whitman:

"The slumbering and liquid trees."

The tree and its fruit are like a sponge which the rains have filled. Through them and through all living bodies there goes on the commerce of vital growth, tin vessels fleets and succession of fleets, laden with material bound for distant shores, to build up and repair, and restore the waste of the physical frame.

Then the rain means relaxation; the tension in Nature and in all her creatures is lessened. The trees drop their leaves or let go their ripened fruit. The tree itself will fall in a still, damp day, when but yesterday it withstood a gale of wind. A moist, south wind penetrates even the mind and makes its grasp less tenacious. It ought to take less to kill a man on a rainy day than on a clear. The direct support of the sun is withdrawn; life is under a cloud; a masculine

mood gives place to something like a feminine. In this sense rain is the grief, the weeping of nature, the relief of a burdened or agonized heart. But tears from nature's eyelids are always remedial and prepare the way for brighter, purer skies.—John Burroughs, in *Scribner for July*.

GANG & SULKY PLOWS.

IMPROVEMENTS are constantly being made in all kinds of labor saving machines, and more especially in farm implements, and farmers are learning that the saving of time and labor can best be accomplished by using the best implements manufactured. In this connection we wish to speak more particularly of the

GANG & SULKY PLOW

made by Avery & Sons of Louisville, Ky., which we have recently examined at the sales-rooms of

J. W. LOWELL & CO.,

of this city. About 60 of these plows have been sold by them in the last few weeks, probably a larger number than has ever before been sold in this Territory since its first settlement. Farmers are getting tired of being jerked and twitched around all day by following the old style of plows, and find that by using the

AVERY GANG OR SULKY PLOW,

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We give below a letter from Mr. John Rouse, of Goshen, known as one of the oldest settlers and leading farmers of this Territory, who has tested the AVERY PLOW and knows its merits.

GOSHEN, Utah,
Feb. 19, 1878.

J. W. Lowell & Co.,

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Yours respectfully,
JOHN ROUSE.

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