

disposal to punish violators of the law. Instead of proclaiming abroad their knowledge of widespread lawlessness, why have they not imparted their alleged information in such a way that the evil of which they complain might be checked? As it is, they are but retailers of scandal, repeaters of prurient stories that have been rolled as sweet morsels under the tongues of salacious gossips. Out of two thousand such cases as they describe, resulting in at least "one thousand births since January 4, 1896," they surely must have been able to prove enough to give some color to their reckless assertion. But perhaps they will fall back on the following section of resolutions:

Fourth—That this situation may be perpetuated, and this peculiar institution flourish, that ubiquitous thing known as "Church influence," so affects men that those who could testify to this lawlessness are silent, juries refuse to find indictments, and officers make no arrests. Hence religious adultery goes unpunished and the "kingdom" grows apace. From the heads of the Church down, polygamy flourishes.

What are we to understand from this remarkable assertion, reflecting, as it does, not only upon the juries, but upon the officers of the law in this State? Do the Presbyterian ministers wish us to understand that they are themselves so affected by what they call "Church influence" that they have been "silent" when they could have testified against the alleged lawlessness prevailing in Utah? Is it possible that "Mormon" Church influence is so potent and "ubiquitous" that even Presbyterian preachers are afraid to testify, specifically, before juries and officers of the law of that which they are not afraid to allege, generally, by public resolutions? If what they say is true, they are accessories after the fact to the offense of what they term "religious adultery." They are willing to act as tale-bearers among the people, but not to risk prosecution for perjury or libel by swearing out direct charges of that which they impersonally proclaim upon the housetops. They seem willing to turn detectives that they may nose out something which they can use for the delection of readers whose literary palates desire "spicy" pabulum, but unwilling to do anything which would be of service in magnifying the law. A very "Christian" position to take, truly! Perhaps they will explain that they do not pretend to "know" of those cases of which they speak, but they have merely "come to their notice." This will not help their cause in the least. It will stamp them as scandal-mongers, tattlers, vain babblers, dispensers of idle stories, panderers to vile tastes, prostitutes of the power of the pulpit. All this for the malicious purpose of injuring a whole community on rumors about the acts of a few of its members.

But there is another turn to this terrible tale. "Polygamy flourishes," does it? Can any of these prevaricators point to a single case of polygamy in the "Mormon" Church since the issuance of the Manifesto of October 6, 1890? The term "polygamy" has a well-defined legal and lingual meaning. It is in law the offense of marrying during the lifetime of a lawful and undivorced wife or husband. The offense of polygamy is distinct and different from that of "unlawful cohabitation." They understand that very well. If they do not, they are densely ignorant of terms with which everybody of ordinary intelligence in Utah is familiar. In sending abroad the statement that "From the heads of the Church down polygamy flourishes," they intend to convey to the people of the United

States the false idea that polygamous marriages are still solemnized in this State. They also know that such a statement is utterly and atrociously untrue. In the midst of the peculiar conditions of society in Utah, a polygamous marriage could not possibly take place without becoming known. There are officers of the law who would only be too ready to pounce upon the parties and bring them to justice. These Presbyterian ministers themselves, if they only knew of such a case and could prove it, would be eager to step forward as complainants, even if only for the purpose of proclaiming to the nation the "perfidy of the Mormons." The fact that there are no prosecutions for polygamy in Utah is a potent and complete denial of the slander emanating from the Utah Presbytery in their meeting at Mantle.

And now a word about the condition of family affairs among those who, in good faith, many years ago, contracted plural marriages under Church regulations and sacred covenants, binding upon them, as they conscientiously believe, both for time and eternity. When Utah was admitted as a State in the Union, it was with the understanding, not to say contract except by the State Constitution, that polygamous marriages in Utah would cease. That understanding has been strictly and religiously adhered to by the authorities and members of the "Mormon" Church. It has not been violated in any particular. At the same time there was a tacit understanding, not to say contract, that the dead strife should be buried; that family obligations already entered into and maintained for years should not be disrupted; that men should be permitted without legal jeopardy to care for, support and recognize their plural families, educate their children, and perform a manly and humane duty to those thus dependent upon them. The proof of this understanding exists in the cessation of wholesale prosecutions for unlawful cohabitation, the abandonment of the system of espionage which once prevailed, and the good feelings which have taken the place of those animosities that separated "Mormons" and "Gentiles" on account of social conditions. Who does not appreciate the change? Who is there in Utah that desires to return to the old conditions? No one, unless it be these Presbyterian prevaricators and persons of their ilk. There is no public scandal, except what they raise or promote. Society is as serene and pure and chaste in Utah as in any other State of the Union.

It is true that men who contracted plural marriages in the old times refuse now to repudiate the families whom it is their duty to cherish and support. As a rule, they do this as closely as possible within the law. It may be as was naturally expected, that there are some few cases of the kind mentioned by the religious gentlemen who wish to raise a rumpus, but that their wild assertions are huge exaggerations will not be denied by any truthful and well-informed resident of the State. What good purpose can be served by these occasional fulminations from professed Christian ministers in Utah? Polygamy stopped in 1890, how long will it take to entirely remove even the appearance of plural family associations? Can any moral good result from the stories that proceed from these religious cliques? Will anything be accomplished for Christianity, for good doctrine, for social order, by this stirring up of offensive matters? It may result in bringing in dollars and dimes to the Presbyterian collection boxes

outside of Utah, which appears to be the only practical object to be attained; but how will that count as against the evil effects, and how will that balance in the great day of accounts against the falsehoods, perversions and exaggerations of the Utah Presbytery?

It is related of "Christian" missionary work in heathendom that a polygamous chief, converted to one of the numerous modern religious sects, was instructed that he could not receive baptism until he had separated from all his wives but one. After a time he returned to the minister and announced himself a monogamist. Being questioned as to what he had done with his plural wives he promptly replied, "Me eat 'em." Do our Christian friends (?) expect the "Mormons" to summarily dispose of their plural families to please the Presbytery? Are the wives who entered into marriage relations honestly, religiously and devotedly to be cast off, to become a public charge, to be exposed as a prey to the libidinous and to be shut out from the society of those whom they hold most dear? Shame on the professedly pious perverters of the truth who wish to harass and destroy people because they cannot convert them! If polygamous marriages were being solemnized in Utah, and thus the revival and continuation of former social conditions were threatened, there might be some reasonable pretext for an anti-Mormon outcry. But everybody here knows that such unions have ceased in this State, and can see that in the very nature of things, if let alone, the institution will gradually and speedily become obsolete. The better classes of all faiths and parties recognize this, and have no desire to stir up a conflict or to return to the strifes of the past. And it may be safely avowed that if such a state of affairs should be brought about, as certain disappointed and malicious sectarians appear to desire, the Mormon people will not be the greatest sufferers from the change. Those marplots may write that down in their diaries and embody it in their future resolutions, if they choose. At any rate they should "read, mark, learn and invariably digest" it, and it may help them to mind their own business if it fails to hinder them from perverting the truth.

The next resolution reads thus:

"Fifth—If a person has the temerity to call public attention to this state of affairs, he is roundly denounced as the enemy of the people, and soon becomes aware of the unfortunate blunder he has made. Want of employment, want of business, or a sultry state of the atmosphere, either or all of these instruct him that a change of locality will be convenient. Hence people and newspapers that hope to do business here, and enjoy our salubrious climate find it advantageous to discuss other than the present situation in Utah."

The insinuation in the foregoing paragraph is that it is unsafe for persons who speak against the "Mormons" to live in Utah. It is but the old, exploded and decayed slander, galvanized into new form to serve the purpose of reverend defamers in "holy orders." For years and years it was flashed on the wires, printed in the daily papers, copied by the religious press, and repeated in the pulpits of the churches. The refutation of the falsehood was made complete by the failure of its promulgators to adduce a single case of actual injury to a "Gentile" for telling the truth about the "Mormons." Preachers of different denominations have lived by libelling the "Mormons" and have never been molested by the people whom they traduced. The Presbyterian preachers and teachers who have scattered falsehoods about the