

In former times some enthusiasts among the Mormons believed (and some, perhaps, still believe) that the Kingdom has already come, and the reign of the Saints has already begun in Zion; fulfilling the prophetic oracles of the Book of Daniel and the Revelations of St. John; and it will be seen upon what theory the Mormons are charged with disloyalty to the civil authority, especially as it is claimed that they are bound to obey the head of their church, just as it has been maintained that the Catholics are bound to obey the Pope of Rome.

Accordingly, at an early day in Missouri, about the time Governor Boggs issued his Herald-like proclamation that all the Mormons should be exterminated, when one of the Saints was on trial before a Dogberry justice of the peace on a charge of "treason," the prisoner was asked the question, "Do you believe in the Book of Daniel?" The prisoner answered in the affirmative. "Put that down," said the justice to his clerk, that is evidence of treason."

However, the leading Mormons of this day hold with other denominations that the "Kingdom" is yet to "come."

Again, there were troublous times in Utah between thirty and forty years ago, growing out of a conflict in the jurisdiction of the courts. An army was sent out by President Buchanan in 1857. In this "Mormon war," I believe, nobody was hurt—and Brigham Young sent out his hosts to meet the invaders with the extraordinary order that "no blood be shed." Under the excitement many intemperate speeches and threats were made by Brigham and others.

The "Mormons" avow their fealty to the government under the constitution, which they say is of divine origin; and during my seven years sojourn in Utah there was no attempt, and there did not appear to be the slightest disposition, to raise an insurrection or oppose the execution of the laws by force.

But it is true that from time to time they criticised the judges of the courts and other Federal officers, charging them with violating the law, and cruelty and injustice in its administration. For example:

The Federal judges in Utah a few years ago made an extraordinary decision in the application of what was called "Segregation." The third section of the so-called Edmunds act of 1882 makes it an indictable offense for any male person to cohabit with more than one woman, and fixes the maximum punishment at a fine of \$300 and imprisonment for six months. But the judges invented a new doctrine and called it "Segregation," the gist of which is that, if a man had been living with two or more wives for three years, the period of the statute of limitations, the grand jury might "segregate," that is, divide up the three years into periods of a year, a month, a week or a day each, and bring in a separate indictment for each of these "segregated" periods; so that the three years being "segregated" into periods of one day each, the offender,

for three years' continuous cohabitation, might be indicted 1095 times, with cumulative fines and imprisonments amounting to \$328,590 fines and 547 years and six months imprisonment.

This doctrine was applied in many cases. The Mormons criticised it as contrary to law, and against the whole course of judicial decisions, in similar cases, both in England and America, and that by a sort of judicial legislation, the judges sought to punish a man an indefinite number of times for one offense in violation of the Constitution. But the judges gave no heed to these "disloyal" complaints and went on "segregating" until the Supreme Court of the United States reversed the cases and decided that the Mormons were right, and the Utah judges were wrong. In Snow, 120, U. S. S. C. Rep., page 274.

Another case of Mormon disloyalty" occurred in the autumn of 1882. A majority of the Utah commission decided that a man was not entitled to be registered as a voter who had married a plural wife subsequent to July 1, 1862 (the date of the passage of the first act concerning polygamy) although all his wives, or all but one, had died from ten to twenty years before.

The Mormons were so disloyal that they criticised this ruling as absurd, unreasonable and contrary to law. "How," they asked, "can a man be a polygamist who has no wife at all?"

This doctrine, however, continued to be enforced by the commission for over two years, and many of the leading citizens were denied the right to vote or hold office (among them Wm. Jennings, the mayor), although they had had no more than one wife for many years. Finally, after the customary "law's delay," the Supreme Court of the United States decided that this ruling of the commission was erroneous. *Murphy vs. Ramsey et al.* 115, Supreme Court Rep. page 15.

Another rare specimen, a new variety of the *scarabæus segregationis* of Utah, was examined, dissected and immolated by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Hans Neilsen*, 131 United States Supreme Court Rep., page 176.

Error No. 4. There is a general misapprehension in the public mind in regard to the extent to which polygamy is practiced, and also as to its present status.

Of the whole Mormon population in Utah only a very small per cent are in polygamy; and of the adult males, from 85 to 95 per cent are not living in a polygamous relation.

But, before proceeding further in relation to the present condition in regard to polygamy, I will give my solution of the very natural and reasonable query: "How did it come to pass that a people so intensely devotional and religious and possessed of so many good qualities should have accepted the creed and practices of polygamy, so repugnant to European and American civilization?"

For a right understanding of this question it is necessary to consider the Mormon doctrine of "continuous revelation."

They believe, as before stated, in the revelations of Moses and the Prophets, as recorded in the Old Testament, and also in the "gift of prophecy," as promised in the New Testament, "to them who believe."

They say that from the days of the Patriarchs of Israel down to the revelations of John on the Isle of Patmos, after the death of Christ, there was a long line of prophets, seers and revelators, who appeared at different ages and through many centuries, such as Daniel, Israel, Jeremiah, Habakuk, Nahum, and so on. They declare that it is not consistent with the divine wisdom, after centuries of communication from the Celestial Kingdom through the prophetic oracles, mankind should have been suddenly cut off, and enclosed as with a canopy of brass from all further light from above.

Accordingly, when Joseph Smith appeared and was accepted as a "prophet, seer and revelator" in "these latter days," and proclaimed the "dispensation of the fulness of times," the revelations claimed to have been received by him were accepted by his followers as emanations from his divine will. These "revelations" are printed in a book entitled the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants," and among them is one sanctioning a plurality of wives. This is the real origin of polygamy among the Mormons; although the example of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David and Solomon and other noted personages among the chosen people made it easier for the Mormons to accept the modern "revelation;" and yet when the doctrine was first publicly promulgated in Salt Lake City in 1852, it was received by many of the "Saints" with reluctance or aversion. However, the power and influence of Brigham Young were so potential, and the confidence of the people in him, as a wise law-giver and a Prophet, was so great, that polygamy was accepted as a part of the creed.

But sagacious men among the Mormons have long foreseen that the practice of polygamy must eventually be abandoned, and since the death of Brigham Young in 1877 there has been a constantly increasing disposition among the people to unload this incubus from their shoulders. The difficulties in the way of an immediate change in this respect can be readily imagined.

Three years ago, however, important steps in this direction were taken by a great majority of the Mormon people. An act of Congress, which took effect on March 3, 1887, required of every voter, as a condition precedent to registration, that he should make an affidavit declaring, among other things, that he would not enter the polygamous relation nor commit fornication or adultery, and that he would not aid or abet, counsel or advise others to commit any of such offenses.