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PLURALITY OF WIVES—CAUSES OF OPPOSITION.

The visible lack of reasoning and argument in everything that has yet been advanced against plurality of wives, naturally leads the honest, reflective mind to inquire what are the causes of opposition to the principle? There are many of them, but they range themselves under a very few heads. The first and chief one is found in the enmity which Satan and all who permit themselves to be influenced by him have ever manifested against the work of God on the earth, and against every principle of truth which He has revealed. That such enmity has existed and does exist is no empty assertion, but one which all sacred and much secular history sustains. That enmity killed the prophets, crucified the Savior and persecuted the people of God in all ages.

Another cause of opposition, which grows out of the previous one, having its root in ignorance and drawing its strength from error, is traditional prejudice. Corrupt men who, reckless of consequences, would trample every truth under foot to carry their object, no matter how unjust and unrighteous it may be, stir up the prejudices of the masses against whatever may interfere with their purposes or oppose their unlawful desires. Ignorant zealots, too, blinded with traditional prejudice, have ever been opposed to any principle which was not embraced within their contracted set of notions; and with a mad enthusiasm have wielded all the influence which energy and perverted ability could bestow to oppose the truth. These are facts written in the book of human character. They are open to be read of all men.

How many of all those who join the outcry against plurality of wives understand the nature of the principle, its workings and results? How many have given it thought and reflection? We venture nothing in saying but few. The many do not pause to think concerning the doctrine. It comes in contact with a prejudice established in the nations of Christendom, and they conclude that it must be wrong. Were we living under a less liberal constitution and in a country where it would be allowed, many of them would burn us at the stake, for practicing plurality of wives, with as much complacency as Roman Catholics and Protestants burned each other for the love of God and the cause of religion, as they said, and as eastern mobocrats shot down defenceless and unarmed "Mormons,"—men, women and children, because they believed in the revelations of God and in a living Prophet. This cannot be from their horror of licentiousness, for the very atmosphere around them in thousands of places is fetid with the stench of physical and social impurity, which is accepted as a matter of course. Habit has accustomed millions to look with a careless eye on the most foul and glaring licentiousness, to condemn it in theory but endorse it in practice; while honorable marriage, when it includes more than one wife, is at once condemned, without thought or argument, because it is an innovation upon established usages, which, apart

from religion, have woefully failed in their practical working.

Mankind are so much the creatures of habit, whether in thought or action, and governed to such an extent by traditional ideas, that every innovation upon them, no matter how true or correct it may be, is repelled, as it were, instinctively. Thus every great initial improvement in manufactures has met with the most bitter opposition from the very classes who ultimately received the greatest benefit from it; every important scientific truth has had to fight its way through the opposing ranks of scientific men, whose accepted theories it proved erroneous; every principle which God has revealed has brought persecution on those who embraced it. Jesus said, "I come not to send peace but a sword;" yet the gospel He taught was a gospel of peace; but it was at variance with established and accepted error, and traditional prejudice bitterly opposed it. Natives of countries, where plurality of wives is practiced, with the strictest sense of virtue, have no repugnance against the principle,—it is a custom of the country and accepted as a matter of course. Inhabitants of monogamic countries, where licentiousness is publicly paraded and openly practiced, turn away from it with affected horror,—it comes in contact with traditional prejudice. Yet like every true principle, it has been revealed for the good of mankind; but that the honest-hearted in the world will not generally admit until they pause to think and reason on it, and see its purity and beneficial results practically demonstrated. This a few years will accomplish; then many of those now opposed to the principle will be its staunchest adherents; they will understand it and see the wisdom of the Creator in its revelation.

Another cause of opposition is found in the wide-spread corruption that exists in Christendom. It is a notorious fact that those who are most loudly violent against it, through the great cities, are persons who are living in open violation of every law of virtue. Lewd women rail against it; and lewd men, who see in women the creatures only of man's baser passions, lead them in the outcry. Their opposition is genuine. Their minds are so corrupted that they can see nothing holy in the communion of the sexes. They judge all others by their own depraved natures. To reason with them is waste of time. They have formed for themselves filthy habits and obscene thoughts, and through such impurity they look upon plurality of wives. We have no arguments to throw away on them. Our object is to disabuse honest minds of erroneous impression, that they may understand the principle as God has made it known for the good of His children, when practiced in righteousness.

These opposing causes have to be contended with, in the introduction of every truth of the gospel. If plurality of wives did not exist, notwithstanding all that may be averred to the contrary, the enmity that now operates against us would still exist. For the few principles of the gospel which have been preserved in a perverted manner among men, have become so mixed with error, that when they were again revealed in purity, they cut at the root of all existing religious opinions. The introduction of the fulness of the gospel declared that the existing religions were false. This struck at the pet ideas and traditional prejudices which were held dearest by many millions; for men do not cling with such tenacity to any idea as that which they firmly believe yet cannot demonstrate. Hence, whether plurality of wives were taught and practiced by us or not, we would still be advocating truths which the traditional prejudices of mankind are op-

posed to, and would have to encounter enmity and the opposition springing therefrom.

In the gospel plan of salvation, the principle of plurality of wives comes in as a means of stemming the tide of corruption that is flooding the world, and restoring mankind to a condition of primal virtue, social excellence and physical power.

✓ ENCOURAGING.

Our general rule is to omit comments on items in the columns "By Telegraph," aware that each reader is able and generally prefers to make his own comments thereon. But the "whereas," in President Johnson's proclamation declaring peace, April 2, that "The Constitution of the United States provides for CONSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITIES ONLY AS STATES, AND NOT AS TERRITORIES," is so just and true that we reprint it, as strongly evidencing the correct and statesmanlike views of the President in regard to the constitutional rights of American citizens. We have always objected to the applying of the English colonial rule to our Territories, on the ground of its palpable injustice, it being contrary to both the spirit and letter of the Constitution; and of course we are pleased to see that President Johnson so definitely asserts the only correct construction of the Constitution in reference to Territories.

An additional reason why Territories should be allowed to elect all their officers, and of course enact all local laws, subject only to fair Constitutional limits in so doing, to which no one objects, is found in the remark of Senator Conness, of California, reprinted from telegraphic news published elsewhere in this number, as follows:—"The bill called his attention to the fact that Territorial officers were selected from superannuated politicians from the East, for whom no use could be found at home." That Mr. Conness' statement is in the main correct, all Utah's experience with Federal officials, so unconstitutionally appointed, most amply testifies.

Congress have plenty to do, without in the least infringing upon rights guaranteed by the Constitution; and we feel assured that when they fully extend to Territories the great principle underlying our free institutions, "that all just power is derived from the consent of the governed," and permit Territories to elect their own officers and enact their own laws, subject only to the restriction already mentioned, they will not only be doing as they would be done by, but will, through so just a course, have leisure, understanding and power for a far better performance of their really legitimate duties. We are clearly and decidedly of this opinion.

WE ARE THANKFUL.

It is gratifying after running through a batch of exchanges and noting the ebullitions of seething passion that are working in both hemispheres, to contemplate the peaceful calmness and quiet industry that prevail throughout maligned and despised Utah. We are waging a conflict here, but it is different from those that excite interest in other places. We are seeking to subdue the valleys around us and subject them to our control, that their productive powers may be developed for the good of mankind. Our energies are not being exhausted in devising means to destroy and bring misery upon others of our race; but they are being trained to bless ourselves and all who seek to share with us the blessings of peace and honest, honorable prosperity in a straightforward and upright way. True, there are a few within the confines of the Territory, who, not finding here sufficient of a congenial element to satisfy their depraved, corrupt desires, would like to see us torn by dissensions and

festering with the corruptions to which they have been accustomed. They work and plot, and plot and work to consummate their designs; but the miserable, contemptible things will pass into oblivion and be forgotten with their impotent efforts to destroy the work of God.

What a sad picture the world would present at present to one who could look upon it with a clear eye lighted up with the intelligence of eternity? A race of beings endowed with attributes and powers which if properly developed would exalt them to a condition of excellence of which ordinary thought can form no conception, grovelling in wilful debasement and with no higher ambition than to destroy each other. The dramatist who made one of his characters say "It is a mad world, my masters," perpetrated a biting sarcasm; and the insanity is not confined to one section or country, nor to one people or nation; but is so wide-spread that it governs in the councils of nations and finds the earth peopled with its victims. An old adage says that nothing is so well distributed as wisdom, for everyone thinks he has enough of it; and they who have least imagine they have most. This is true in the main; and the world is in that unenviable condition which fancies an extraordinary superabundance of wisdom when there is a woe-ful lack of it.

When one man kills another with malice aforethought he is adjudged guilty of murder and punished by law for the deed; but when ten thousand or a hundred thousand men meet and seek to kill each other it is glorious! Some side wins a great victory! and a few thousands more manure the soil where their bones are buried. And the game of war goes on. As one party gets tired out another is preparing to enter upon the exciting contest. As a fresh game commences a new sensation is produced; the bloodier, more terrible and more appalling the incidents are, the better satisfied is the craving, morbid appetite which demands such food. Perhaps at this moment there are not less than seven millions of men in Christendom who are hired, fed, clothed and trained expressly to kill human beings. Politicians squabble and contend; statesmen strive to outface and outwit each other in a species of dishonesty called diplomacy, and work it up once in a while into a respectable sized war, while the great multitude send a part of their number to kill or be killed and pay them for doing the work. After a sufficient number are put under the earth, having poured out their blood as a libation to the deity of insanity, the quarrel is ended, a peace patched up, and the great multitude breed some more to be killed and gather more means to pay them, while a new quarrel is being worked up by those who generally are too careful of their precious lives to risk them within the smell of "villainous saltpetre." And such is war; a kind of bloody and terrible game that the nations play at, which keeps the population within reasonable bounds without enforcing the doctrine of Malthus or any similar arrangement. From the petty broil of a groggery to the death struggle of mighty powers the principle is the same,—a desire to waste and destroy, to waste human life and trample under foot the works of peace. The spirit is growing and spreading. The people of the nations are moved by it. The arbitrament of cannon and bayonet is resorted to for the settlement of trivial difficulties, and the human heart is growing to thirst for blood as the tiger does that slays for the pastime of destroying. It is sorrowful to contemplate, but the lamentable facts exist. The farther the inhabitants of the earth travel from God, from truth, from the principles of the gospel, the wider are they separated