

Correspondence.

Editor Deseret News.—As it is asserted that we "as a people are spiritualists," that Joseph Smith was "an advanced medium;" and that our system is identical with spiritualism; I shall be glad to show that these assertions are unfounded.

To aver that we are spiritualists because we believe in spiritual communication is a mistake; the spiritualist either becomes himself a "medium," by being taken possession of by a disembodied spirit or he receives communications through one who is thus possessed. We receive communications for ourselves or through others, as the result of obedience to the ordinances of the gospel; our understandings being quickened and illuminated by the Holy Spirit—the "spirit of prophecy." As to Joseph Smith being an "advanced medium," in the sense used by A. I. Davis and other Spiritualists; we admit that he was visited and sent forth by the Lord Jesus Christ as a witness of the restoration of the gospel. That he was also visited by Peter, James and John who laid their hands upon him and conferred upon him the authority of the holy priesthood, which is the authority to act as a representative of our Heavenly Father. We admit that all the power claimed by the Spiritualists during the twenty years of their existence was possessed by Joseph Smith with the divine right to exercise it.

But, Sir, the Spiritualist does not believe in this priesthood which Joseph held; nor in the authority by which it is held. The gospel taught by Jesus Christ is completely ignored by him. The resurrection of the body is denied. Spiritualism "acknowledges no sacrifice," no ordinances; "worships at no shrine except that which is in us," "erects no altar but that which we may find material for its erection in every willing heart, sacred to the supremacy of the human soul, and, daily worship at its shrine!"

Who does not know that the Spiritualist either loses his identity during the time of his being under the influence of the disembodied spirit; or else, if he believe the dictum of the "Medium," puts his confidence in the controlling spirit? The Latter Day Saint is not in any way thus affected; his agency is not controlled; his identity is not disturbed. He receives additional light or intelligence to judge of objects which he perceives, to understand them as they are. It is the spirit of truth he receive. Who is to know what spirit is received when a medium is controlled by an unknown personage? Who can guarantee the presence in a medium, simply because that medium, under an influence which completely controls him, says, of the spirit in possession, "I am Joseph Smith," or "Jesus Christ."

Besides the Spiritualist does not believe in God as a being of personage. They teach that "God is the great permeating, all-pervading life"—principle. This is the old Pantheism—"God in every thing." That proposition, when divested of its adjuncts is reduced to the expression: "God is the life principle." There is no doubt of the correctness of this expression. But this does not affect His existence as an individualized being. At all events we do not see as the Spiritualists do on this important point?

There is not time here to show all the points in which there is complete similarity. The pre-existence of man is denied by Spiritualists; the existence of man upon the earth "the material plane" as they call it, as a probation or preparation for a future return to the earth, is denied. To them this existence is the embryonic one, the spirit or life principle is individualized on this material plane, with a view to its unfoldment or development in the spiritual spheres.

As to the kingdom of God being established upon the earth, the will of God being done on the earth as it is done in heaven, obedience to one with a view to accelerate the restitution of all things, to their pristine perfectability and simplicity, these ideas are scouted by all spiritualists. The present age, with them, is the advanced age. There has been no retrogradation in man since first he was placed upon this planet by his Heavenly Father; science and philosophy say so, and the angels say so.

Spiritualism may change the form of unbelief, but it does not alter its character. The scepticism of the age as to the immortality of the soul may be removed, but what we want is faith in

God, as the Creator of the heavens and the earth, faith in man's great destiny to live again upon this fair earth in a glorified and immortal condition, faith in the words of eternal life, as made known to them by revelation from God. These things Spiritualism does not teach, nor any other principle in common with the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

BETH.

HILLSBORO, LOWER VILLAGE,
N. H., Jan. 8th, 1870.

Editor Deseret News.—Dear Sir.—I have received nothing but courteous, kind treatment from friends and strangers since I left my mountain home. There is a universal desire to hear and learn something of Utah and its people generally, though I think mostly from curiosity, which, however, no doubt, will result in good, as all seem to be much better pleased and satisfied with us after hearing than before, and come to the rational conclusion that we are no worse than the rest of mankind even on the social question, and in all others they seem inclined to give us the preference.

I had the pleasure of being present, by invitation, at the silver wedding of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Lines of Concord, N. H., on the evening of Christmas day, where I was afforded the pleasurable opportunity, in a few remarks, of bringing before the minds of the company the blessings accruing to Abraham and to all the families of the earth through him, in the marriage relations; (as nearly all present were married people) and that if people in this or any other age wished to enjoy the society of their companions in eternity they must necessarily obey the laws by which they could be reinstated, to the high privileges enjoyed by mankind before the fall. I did not forget to inform them that the fullness of the gospel, with its administrations was fully competent to the task, all of which they listened to with great attention, but did not seem to comprehend, though all that I spoke with, after, acknowledged it plain and that they could not see why it should not be so.

Nearly every gentleman that I have conversed with, and I have conversed with a great many, agree that our country is in anything but a favorable condition, politically and socially. As to its religion, it is so near nothing, that very little is said about it. Spiritualism and infidelity seem to pervade the minds of the people, though they themselves do not appear to perceive it, and they almost universally have greenbacks on the brain. They freely acknowledge that there must be a great amount of executive ability in Utah, particularly by President B. Young, (not acknowledging the hand of God in anything of course) to have kept the people together under such extreme vicissitudes of life (as I have described), as they have been called upon to pass through on account of the acts and doings of the corrupt administrators of our General and State Governments.

Space admonishes me that I must close. I had the pleasure, by favor of Mr. Charles Gillis, Postmaster of this place, to peruse two copies of the DESERET NEWS, which is all that I have seen since I left Utah. Please remember me to the Presidency and all inquiring friends.

Peace be with you all, and prosperity attend the labors of Zion, is the desire of your brother in the gospel covenant,
A. H. RALEIGH.

HONOLULU, OAHU, SANDWICH
ISLANDS, Dec. 29 '69.

Editor Deseret News.—Dear Brother:—I don't feel disposed to write to all my numerous friends in Zion until fairly settled down, so I embrace this opportunity of writing to you, hoping you will make mention of it, or publish our arrival here, in the DAILY NEWS.

We arrived here yesterday, making the trip from San Francisco in exactly eleven days. The voyage, though pleasant to those who follow the sea, was quite trying to us, the ladies especially. The steamer *Idaho* is an excellent cradle and can "out rock any ship that ever did rock." I found it to be a nuisance to me, especially when troubled with the headache.

The Pilgrim Fathers did not, I presume, feel more thankful when they discovered the land of America than we did when we reached these islands. The sight of land is ever a source of joy to sea voyagers, and nothing seems to arouse convalescent persons to a more speedy recovery than the sight

of mother earth. After many days at sea, the sight of Honolulu cannot but present a pleasing appearance to those fond of the romantic; but the motley crowds who throng the streets are still more objects of amusement to the strangers, than the town itself. The native men are staunch, robust looking fellows and can carry a hay stack with all the ease possible. You may think I am joking, but I positively saw one carrying two hay stacks; I saw a big object moving along the street and stopped to see what sort of a propeller it had, when to my utter astonishment I discovered it to be a native Kanaka. But what about the women? Well, sir, a native woman is a whole team and no mistake! There is no possibility of a man spanning one of them around the waist, they are far too massive.

I don't know whether it would be good policy to let you know my opinion of the country; but with all its fascinations there is no place like home. When the ladies landed there was not a possibility of persuading them to go on a schooner around to Laie, so we sent our luggage around and are now awaiting some conveyance from brother Nebeker, having sent an express over to him for that purpose. We are in very good quarters in this place, having been furnished a room and bedding by bro. Wing. Bros. King, Hawkins and myself as well as the ladies are recruiting as fast as possible from the effects of the sea voyage. Bros. King and Hawkins, though, are almost disabled over a calabash of poi.

We are a long way from home, but I calculate that as long as we are kept here you shall know something of us. We are looking for some conveyance from Bro. Nebeker this evening and hope to have an excellent romantic tour overland to Laie. More anon.

With love to you, bro. Joseph F. and all our friends, in which bro. King and Hawkins and the ladies join.

I remain,

Respectfully,

H. H. CLUFF.

The following letter from a gentleman not connected with our church, and devoid of sympathy for our religious views may not be uninteresting to our readers. It would have appeared sooner, but has been mislaid.

ELKO, Dec. 21, 1869.

Editor Deseret News.—During a stay of over twenty years on the Pacific coast I have been gleaning information regarding the character of the Mormons; but from the various statements made by emigrants passing through Utah, it has been an impossibility to form anything like a correct opinion of her people without analyzing the statements and the incentives to the various opinions expressed. I have never come across a "Mormon" who was dissatisfied with the social organization prevailing in Salt Lake, nor have I ever come across an emigrant who has stayed in Salt Lake for any length of time that would condescend to reason at all, but denied all those extravagant statements made by parties hostile to the "Mormons;" neither have I ever come across a single individual who expressed an abhorrence of the "Mormons" that could give the least plausible reason for their hostility, or who had during their stay in Salt Lake been fined or punished except for the violation of some *Lex Locii*. The only real objection that I ever heard against the people of Utah was founded upon their practice of the doctrine of polygamy. But when we come to analyze that objection we find it without foundation, for the reason that the most violent opponents of polygamy, are in most cases men of immoral lives, men who would not consider it at all derogatory to their characters to be seen in houses of ill fame, institutions which, I have been informed by these very opponents, do not exist in Salt Lake City.

Now in regard to polygamy, the question resolves itself simply into this: Which is preferable in a community, the practice of polygamy, or the existence of houses of ill fame, and as I see the question is about to become a national one, I would like to see an honest and serious discussion of the subject. Mr. Cragin of New Hampshire, I see by the papers, has introduced a bill with amendments, for the execution of the law against polygamy in Utah. The papers do not say what these amendments are; perhaps they are to suppress the practice of polygamy and establish brothels and protect prostitutes. This question is one of serious import. I know that the practice of plural marriage is considered a crime against the

laws of Christendom, but on what grounds have these laws been founded? Certainly not upon the word of God as given to us in the Bible, because we see by that book that those said to have been most favored by Him were polygamists. Abraham had children by at least two women,—Sarah and Hagar, Jacob also had Rebecca and Leah, and no doubt others; and Solomon, the only man in the whole world whom God considered good enough to erect a temple to His name had about a thousand wives and concubines. Yet we see, that although God approved of these things they are displeasing to the Puritans of New England.

When I see in the papers, objections to the practice of polygamy by the people of Utah, and the attempts of these New England Senators to overthrow the whole system of "Mormonism," without giving any reasons, for their objections, except the single fact that they are displeased with the practice, and being National legislators are trying if they can to suppress it, I am inclined to doubt the sound policy of their attempted legislation, and would like to see the question thoroughly investigated, and philosophically discussed.

One of the most unreasonable objections I have seen against the Mormons and their doctrines, was founded upon the fact that they found fault with and cowhided a man for insulting one of the young girls of Salt Lake City. Now if those opposed to the practice of polygamy prefer prostitution, and desire to establish brothels, where thieves and rioters can congregate for protection from the officers of the law after robbing their neighbor or disturbing the peace of the community, let them come out like men and state their preferences.

Polygamy or prostitutes is the question now nationalized by Senator Cragin, and there is no going behind it. Polygamy with a peaceable community, legitimate children and comfortably supported females, or prostitution, with ante-natal infanticide, miserable women, with robbers for paramours, thieves for associates and dupes for patrons. Set this question prominently before the American people, aye, before the civilized world and I think I could guess their preference.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the tenets of your church to either believe or disbelieve them, but having been brought up in what your folks call the "Gentile" faith, of course I do not believe anything about your religious professions. But when I learn that there are no gambling houses in Salt Lake City, no brothels, no drunken rowdies there, and that the city contains, it is said, between twenty and thirty thousand people, I cannot help thinking that the Mormons have at least made some improvements in social organization. If the opposers of Mormonism can refer to any eastern city where there is less poverty, better regulations, a happier people, or purer morals, let them do so or cease defending their brothels, and reservoirs of crime and quit their abuse of a people of whom they know less than I do,
AN AMERICAN REASONER.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH.—The Washington *Star* of the 11th instant says:

"The citizens of Corinne, Utah Territory, have built an adobe church, the first Christian edifice in Utah."

We rather think they, the people of Corinne, have had the most need of a Christian church; for prostitutes, blacklegs, and rowdies of every description have been more numerous in that "centre of progress" than in any other portion of Utah; and where the Christian element so largely predominates there is decidedly the most need of a Christian church. Don't you think so *Star*?

U. P. R. R. BLOCKADE.—We are indebted to the courtesy of Mark Croxall, Esq., Manager of the W. U. Telegraph office, in this city, for the following telegram, received this afternoon:

"Snow in the vicinity of Church Buttes is reported to be from twelve to eighteen inches deep and drifting badly. The blockade still continues. The railroad company has a large force at work endeavoring to clear the track. There has also been a heavy sleet storm between Cheyenne and Omaha."

DELIGHTFUL.—Last evening our local attended one of those superlative parties given by the ladies of the Female Relief Societies which have been so numerous and popular of late. This particular one was given by the ladies of the 20th Ward and for local to say he enjoyed himself would give but a faint idea of his exuberant delight. As he retired to his humble domicile at an early hour, with tired limbs and a palpitating heart, he felt fully convinced that if the ladies of Utah are great at Mass Meetings, they are no less at social parties.