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PLURALITY OF WIVES—SOCIAL-  
LY CONSIDERED.

We do not found our opposition to the admission of Utah, upon any conflict of polygamy with the Constitution, for there is none; or with the Federal statutes, for these are silent on the subject; or with the Common Law of England, for that is without binding force on American legislators, and, at best, but a light which judges consult in the absence of statutes. But we found it upon this—that polygamy debases the race, corrupts the man, degrades the woman, brutifies the relations between the sexes, withers the holiest affections of the human heart, desecrates the family hearth, turns love into lust, men into despots, and women into slaves; it is a violation of the eternal laws of our physical and moral nature, a sin against society, a crime against God.

The above is extracted from a copy of the Philadelphia Daily Register, of thirteen years ago, because it contains all that is advanced against plurality of wives, from a social point of view, in a few words; because it proves that the discussion of the subject is not a thing of yesterday, as some would try to make it appear; and because we have not seen anything half so terse or pointed from our opponents on the subject since it was written.

We have patiently sought for some arguments to reply to, when starting to treat upon the subject socially, but have failed to find any. Abuse, vituperation and malignant assertions have been indulged in without limit, but calm rational argument has not yet been attempted by those who declaim against plurality of wives.

No one is required to prove a negative. Were such a thing admitted in argument any number of assertions, the most wild and improbable, might be made, and the truth or falsity of the subject under consideration would never be reached, through the endless obligation of disproving such assertions.

The objections quoted above are, like the entire mass of matter printed against plurality of wives, merely assertions, and we are not required to disprove them; in fact the only way of doing so is by proving their opposites.

The connection between the social and physiological conditions of the human family is so close that it is difficult to deal with them separately, as physiological results are often dependant upon social circumstances. Defenders of monogamy theorise very beautifully and very poetically with regard to its social and moral excellence and physiological elevation. But in this practical, every-day life of ours, mankind are compelled to admit, whether voluntary or otherwise, that an ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of theory. All the assertions made in the extract quoted are based upon the assumed correctness of a theory, which practical results, however bitterly unpalatable they may be, have proved to be a miserable failure. The only way in which the truth can be reached is by carefully noting those results. If it be found that the social condition of society where monogamy is exclusively allowed by legislative enactments, is below that of even eastern countries where plurality of wives is practiced, unrestrained by the fear of God, ungoverned and undirected by Divine revelation, then the conclusion must be reached, whether the admission be made unwillingly or not, that however poetically monogamists may theorise, in practical working the principle has

failed to meet the requirements of society.

Christendom has institutions of almost every kind for the dissemination of what its inhabitants believe are correct principles;—hundreds of thousands of paid preachers; millions of salaried teachers; innumerable schools and educational seminaries; a press that permeates the entire face of the nations, continually wielding a mighty influence for good or evil;—in short, it possesses all or nearly all the advantages claimed for it, which eastern nations lack, for producing a superior condition of morality. Yet, the first thing almost that meets the gaze of those who visit its large cities, under the very shadow of its holy places, flaunting before the buildings devoted to its sacred purposes, its religious and moral cultivation, are the terrible evidences of an existing evil, which has grown and is growing with fearful rapidity, for which a new term has had to be coined,—“the social evil.”

When referring to this plague spot upon society we do not wish to be understood as implying, by imputation or expression, that any comparison can exist between it and plurality of wives, as practiced under the law of God; but in drawing a comparison between monogamy and plurality of wives we note this, because it is the most prominent, practical result of the former which meets the eye at first sight, and appears in all its hideous magnitude on closer examination. Christendom condemns prostitution, repudiates it as unholy; so does the Lord our God; so do we: But its condemnation by Christendom is simply in words,—it is theoretically condemned, but practically endorsed, sanctioned and legislated for. Statesmen, preachers, teachers, legislators and public men of every class have among them those who, though they may loudly decry it, are its most active agents. From the hamlet to the city, from the hovel to the palace, its influence extends, its abominations are practiced, its shameful orgies are celebrated. Christendom theoretically denounces plurality of wives, while it practices a promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, illegitimately and illegally, in a manner the most lewd, filthy and horrible of which it is possible to form any conception. The trivial causes for which divorces are sought in many parts of this great nation, that a change of partners may be obtained, is denounced, and justly so, by every right-thinking moral man and woman; yet throughout Christendom men and women, not a few but an immense percentage, nightly seek a couch of shame and sin, flitting from one criminal partner of an hour to another, until the most loathsome of diseases, brought on by insatiate and unholy sexual intercourse, demands a large share of the attention of medical practitioners, while a class has sprang into existence, as a consequence of it, who are almost exclusively devoted to its cure. With the intelligence of human beings, they sink below the brute creation in bestial and indiscriminate intercourse. A condition of society has thus been produced, from which the lascivious natives of oriental countries, who make any pretensions to respectability, would turn with loathing and disgust.

But do not monogamists abhor this terrible evil? They do, in theory; but it is found to be a practical result of and attendant upon monogamy, wherever and whenever monogamy is enforced and practiced. It is not necessarily involved in one wife marriage, but it is invariably found to accompany or follow it. It is admittedly uncontrolled and uncontrollable by the existing creeds and moral influences of Christendom.

That it is not confined to a few let the facts bear witness. An eminent English statistician declared a few years ago, and his declaration was uncontradicted,

that every twentieth woman under the government of the Queen of Great Britain was a public prostitute. It is a notorious fact that the morality of France, Germany and some other European countries is below that of Britain; and our own nation cannot claim a very great superiority in point of virtue. Add to this the vast amount of moral turpitude revealed in divorce courts, suits of *crim. con.*, seductions, abortions and other kinds of unvirtuousness of which no public mention is ever made, and the social condition of Christendom presents a picture too horrible to dwell on its contemplation. The misery, degradation, debasement and corruption consequent upon the “social evil” are beyond the reach of any statistician.

If this does not “debase the race, corrupt the man, degrade the woman, brutify the relation between the sexes, wither the holiest affections, desecrate the family hearth, turn love into lust, men into despots and women into slaves,” who are bought and sold for a few dimes, then facts have no significance, language has no power, and the evidence of our senses is worthless.

It may be urged that we are trying to exonerate one wrong, by proving that a greater one exists. Not so; we simply aim to show the social condition of the Christian world in the relationship of the sexes, which is the point at issue. Men who are no doubt well meaning and well informed in many respects, see this condition of society, and draw their inferences concerning plurality of wives from it, mis-judging from what they see and deplore of that with which they have no practical acquaintance nor any personal knowledge; while others, corrupt in themselves, can only look through their own filthy and libidinous desires. The evils, then, which are charged upon plurality of wives are really those which are found to attend the illegitimate and indiscriminate intercourse of the sexes, disallowed yet practiced throughout Christendom.

Much as the morality and virtue of the “Mormons” may be sneered at, we challenge the most bitter enemies of our people to point to one such case among us, till the “humanizing” efforts of some who talk loudest of our alleged lasciviousness, brought the evil to our cities. The “social evil,” with all its horrible results, was unknown in Utah until then, and is unknown to-day among those who believe in a plurality of wives.

That the doctrine is not a crime against God has been proved in our previous articles; that it is not a sin against society, nor a violation of our physical and moral being we design showing.

The wrongs of women, under the practical application of the doctrine in this Territory, is a favorite theme with those who most loudly abuse it. What are those wrongs? Where is woman most wronged? In vilified and slandered Utah where she is protected, her virtue preserved, her chastity guarded inviolate, her purity viewed as a pearl beyond price, where she can become the honored wife of the man she loves and the happy mother of his children, who are trained with care and fostered with a guiding parent's hand in paths of righteousness and virtue? or in those vaunted places where she is the prey of every seducer's shellish arts, where, when her holiest affections have been played upon until she becomes the victim of her virtue's murderer, she is cast forth as a pariah to tread the downward path of degradation among the thousands of her fallen sisters, a thing to be loathed, abused, despised, the plaything of a moment, the curse of her destroyers, the living evidence of eternal crime?

ORANGES, says the Sacramento Union, exceedingly fair, and much larger than those raised in Los Angeles, are grown at Bidwell's Bar, Butte County, California.

## UTAH AND HER TRADUCERS.

In the midst of other topics of more or less interest in the East, Utah occasionally forms a subject for consideration, and by the manner in which it appears to be viewed, a measurable degree of importance is attached to it. The simple performance of a duty on our part prompts us to enlighten our neighbors on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, as well as elsewhere, on certain matters with which of necessity we are more familiar than they can possibly be, inasmuch as we reside here, have done for years, and see and understand the various influences that are at work here, some to benefit the Territory and its inhabitants, others to do them material injury if possible. We mean to defend the citizens of Utah against the slanderous imputations of their malicious enemies, who manifest a developed propensity for romancing, or, in plain but pertinent mountain language, lying, which is perhaps without a parallel anywhere else on the face of the earth.

Much of what is asserted against our citizens is so palpably outrageous, that we still hold the belief that no person of reflection would for a moment credit it; yet, as slander after slander is repeated and allowed to pass unnoticed and unquestioned, there may be people, well-meaning and honest, who would come to think there was a foundation for them in truth. We are accused of being intolerant and illiberal, of seeking to curtail the liberty of those who differ from us in religious faith. No better refutation of this could be found, than the fact that we permit the perpetrators of the most malevolent slanders and unblushing falsehoods to daily and hourly walk our streets unmolested and in peaceful quietness, while there is not a boy lingering at a street corner but can retail the latest fabrication of which they are the avowed and public authors. We have never in the least degree sought to infringe upon the rights or curtail the liberty of any person within the bounds of this Territory. We have been forbearing under insult to a degree far past what the patience of the people of any other section of this nation would have borne. Daily a turbid stream of the grossest and most abusive vituperation has been poured forth; our prominent citizens have been and are outrageously slandered and maligned, even when heaping good deeds on their infamous maligners; we have listened to the most unblushing falsehoods uttered by self-styled “regenerators,” and applauded by characters so well known to the community that condemnation from their lips is deemed praise by every good man.

All this, and much more, have our citizens patiently endured, though oftentimes sorely tried in feelings; and were it not for the restraining wisdom of those most bitterly abused, the indignation of an outraged people would have been more loudly expressed than it has been. Now, why has this been endured? Had one-twentieth part of the false allegations made been true, would it have been borne? No; for there is not another people under the face of heaven to-day who would have borne it, false or true. And were our citizens the mass of banded beings they have been pictured, a Vigilance Committee from among them would have set law at open defiance and strung up their traducers, without benefit of judge or jury. But in the language of one of our Judges, uttered a few days ago, the law has been and is paramount in this Territory, its majesty unquestioned, its action everywhere respected.

It has been for the purpose of howling on our citizens to overt acts that this course has been pursued, that the base calumnies perpetrated on them might find a show of justification in acts com-