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THE REVEILLE AND THE "MORMONS."

In the Reese River *Reveille* of April 26th, we find a rejoinder to our remarks on the comments made in that paper concerning the killing of Brassfield. It is refreshing, just now, to read anything about the "Mormons" that is characterized by that courteous style in which the *Reveille* article is written. We have had occasion before now to appreciate the fair, straightforward and gentlemanly manner in which its editor has spoken of us as a people, and take pleasure in expressing that appreciation.

There are some points in the article of the 26th ult. which demand special notice, being not merely pertinent to the case referred to, but to the great question at issue regarding us. The *Reveille* says that we cannot deny but the killing of Brassfield was done by high authority. If by this he means some man high in authority here, we do most emphatically deny it; if he means by "high authority" the Judge of all the earth, we would not like to be so pointed in our denial, taking the action in a general sense and not as an individual deed, for He has expressly declared "The adulterer shall surely die." We have no wish to traduce the dead, nor have we any evidence to show that Brassfield was a vicious wicked man; we are more inclined to the belief that he was made a cat's-paw by worse men than himself. But the man who invades the sanctity of the marriage bed and pollutes it, is an adulterer beyond the shadow of a doubt. And however monogamists may look upon plural marriages, with us they are sacred and holy. There is a law and custom of divorce in this Territory, as elsewhere, and until that law is honored the marriage relationship is intact and undissolved. Brassfield knew of this, yet he sought to invade a relationship the most sacred, and one regulated by direct Divine command to us. We repeat again that we do not know who killed him; whether a friend of the injured man or some personal enemy; whether a "Mormon" or a "Gentile." But he could not have expected any other result, knowing, as he did, the sanctity with which we view the marriage relationship, and the punishment which by universal consent is due the adulterer.

Speaking of polygamy the *Reveille* gets the whole of the opposition to it in a nut shell. He says: "Whether a more natural state of social intercourse, more productive of happiness or good morals, or whether revealed by Divine inspiration, it matters not; the age is against polygamy." But few of those who are at variance with us on this point have the honest manliness to make this avowal, yet it is the main-spring of their opposition. And when they find the strong host of arguments, scriptural, social, moral and physiological, by which the principal is sustained, instead of honorably admitting their truthfulness or openly avowing a repudiation of them, they take shelter behind a mass of vulgar adjectives and vituperative slanders.

The case is put plainly by the *Reveille*. The opposition waged against the doctrine practically says, as he does openly:

You "Mormons" have embodied in your faith a principle which may be a more natural state of social intercourse than what we have adopted; it may produce greater happiness and a higher status of morality; nay, even God may have revealed it to you and commanded it, all these do not matter; it is an innovation upon our established usage, the age is against it, and for these causes you must give it up and yield to our notions. We do not care if it be true, it is something which we have not adopted, and we cannot allow you to adopt it; you must not be wiser and purer than we are.

This is putting the matter in plain unmistakable language; but it sounds rather strange in a land where perfect freedom of conscience is constitutionally guaranteed to all.

The *Reveille* respects the sincerity of our belief and acknowledges our right to it, but cannot admit that the marriage relation has anything to do with worshipping God, "venerable as the doctrine may be." That, friend *Reveille*, is where we differ. That is where your faith takes one direction and ours takes another; and our right to do so differ is the very thing the Constitution guarantees to both you and us. We deem it an essential and a very vital part of religion, underlying, as it does, the very foundation of that earthly existence which the Creator has given us.

You say: "Marriage is a civil contract, and is at least in Protestant countries regulated by civil and not by ecclesiastic law." If this were even so, while our revealed faith teaches us differently, we have the fullest right to the exercise of that faith. Yet in one of those Protestant countries it is but recently that marriage was recognized as a civil contract; and that recognition was allowed to meet a growing want caused by a growing dissent from the form of religion established by civil and not by ecclesiastic law. In Protestant England it is only a few years since none but an ordained ecclesiastic dared to perform the ceremony of marriage, and a marriage solemnized by the most reprobate and outcast ecclesiastic, who was not entirely stripped of his sacerdotal orders, was held valid in law. But to meet the wants and wishes of a large and growing body of dissenters, nonconformists and free-thinkers it was recognized, for the sake of those who so desired it, as a civil contract, after much fruitless opposition on the part of the Anglican episcopacy and the people who believed with them. It must be remembered, too, that the Anglican episcopal church was established by Act of Parliament, and owns as its head a woman who is a lay person, and the head, also, of the civil power. In Roman Catholic countries matrimony is one of the sacraments, always preceded by confession and absolution, and can only be performed by an ecclesiastic. The Roman Catholic dare not recognize it as a civil contract without abjuring one of the essential articles of his faith.

You say that: "When any religious doctrine demands to invade the customs of society or the laws of the country, on the grounds of conscience, it transcends the limits of religious freedom guaranteed by the Constitution, and claims rights destructive of any government." Now what religion does not in some of its doctrines invade the customs of some other portion of society? A little over twenty years ago the Baptists endured the most virulent persecution in Scandinavia, in Europe, for dipping their converts, because that doctrine was an invasion of the customs of society there. Monkish processions and carrying the host are invasions of the customs of Protestant countries. The Shakers inculcate celibacy which invades the customs of all countries, and if universally adopted would leave

the earth uninhabited in about a century, unless illicit intercourse was practiced. Our doctrine of marriage does not invade the customs of society more than this,—and if it did, what then? If the customs of society are wrong, degrading, degenerating and corrupt, shall we be compelled to endorse and adopt them while God has taught us a better way? One of the customs of society is open and general licentiousness. Must we be compelled to adopt it when we know it leads to destruction?

We might name other customs that are flagrantly and admittedly wrong, which the most philanthropic men of the age are seriously and sedulously trying to invade; and every right-thinking man, the editor of the *Reveille* amongst the number, wishes them God-speed. As for invading the laws of the country we have never done so. But Congress, after our faith had been avowed, and the Revelation enjoining plurality of wives upon us had been published, strove to stigmatize us as criminals by passing an act prohibitory of a part of our religious faith and, with us, a most vital and sacred ordinance.

The *Reveille* further says, what is incorrectly said on all hands, that "polygamy is no part of any religion." There you must allow us to correct you. It is a part of our religion, directly commanded by God, and non-observance of it, under Divinely imposed conditions, would ensure the wreck of our hopes of salvation. We have said before, what is conceded from all quarters, that the Constitution guarantees to us the fullest exercise of our religion, so long as that religion does not infringe upon the constitutional rights of any other person or people. If it can be shown that any person is compelled to practice plurality of wives, or is coerced into it; if it can be shown that all the parties are not free agents in their obedience to the doctrine; then, so far as that is the case, we are willing to admit there is a wrong and an infringement of Constitutional rights.

But no such case can be shown. The doctrine, as an article of our faith and a part of our religion, has been voluntarily embraced by the Latter-day Saints, who recognize it as a command from Jehovah, and to endeavor to compel their abandonment of it, though the age be against it, is to seek to rob them of their constitutional rights, and prescribe the manner in which they shall worship God, and the number of His revelations which they may receive with the number they must reject.

We shall be pleased to see the editor of the *Reveille*, when he pays his proposed visit to Great Salt Lake city, and to greet him in our *sanctum*. If he comes with his eyes honestly open, he will find that the "Mormons" have been traduced and lied about most tremendously.

GO FROM HOME FOR NEWS.

On opening a batch of exchanges a few days ago, and looking them over, we felt inclined to rub our eyes, pinch our elbows, try hartshorn, or by some other means find out whether we were awake or had suddenly become subject to the visitation of a distorted dream. The extraordinary excitement and terrible doings in Utah, and particularly in Great Salt Lake City, of which some of them spoke, were certainly news to us, as they no doubt will be to our readers. What sly people, and wonderful as sly, the "Mormons" must be to have such doings around, and keep it so quiet.

We chronicled some time ago an account of this city being cannonaded, which the benighted citizens knew nothing of until the information was brought to them a distance of some two thousand miles or over. But this is more extraordinary still. This whole city, it seems, has been in a state of the

most intense excitement; all the "gentiles" have been notified to leave under penalty of death—You "gentile" friends of ours down street have not heard of that before; and the whole place has been a perfect maelstrom of excited feelings, in which no person's life was safe. It cannot be that we have imitated Rip Van Winkle, and have been sleeping all through this terrible scene. We have thought that we were walking up and down the street daily as usual, and that everything and everybody was pursuing the even tenor of their way, except it might be a few who in some back place were concocting stories of "awful doings in Utah." We never imagined there was such a volcano under our very nose, from which streams of the deadly lava of fanatic violence and wild passions were daily pouring. We presume we will have to hire a team and wagon bearing a moderate sized field piece, to protect us on our peregrinations from the *sanctum* to the domestic domicile. The poor deluded people through the city, who are daily attending to their avocations and duties in life, have no idea that they are such terrible folks and openly perpetrating such fearful acts of violence as are recorded.

As we sit looking out occasionally from the window, while writing this short article, and see the lovely green of the bursting foliage from shade and fruit trees, and witness the quietude and peaceful air which characterize every passer up and down the street, we cannot help asking ourselves what manner of spirit men must be of when they can manufacture such bare-faced falsehoods out of whole cloth. Have they been so successful in their perpetration of past slanders that they think the great public will swallow anything, no matter how incredible, about the "Mormons?" It looks like it.

Gentlemen of the press, east and west, and elsewhere, publish it, and we will be responsible, that there is not from the Atlantic to the Pacific, nor from Maine to Florida any city of the same size as this where there is more peace and quietness, and where life is more secure or more highly estimated than in Great Salt Lake City. We might say more, and justly so. We might say it is the quietest and most orderly city of its size in the Union, but, as Mrs. Partington says, "Comparisons are odorous," and so we forbear.

Many efforts have been made, for some time past, by the clique of greedy speculators and their coadjutors who would like to get a little more by way of fat contracts from Uncle Samuel, to bring about strife, and stir the people here up to do something in retaliation for their insulting and hounding course, that might make capital for them. But they have signally and miserably failed. They are known here; their objects are known, and the people look upon them and their efforts with the most supreme contempt. They have sunk so low already that their vilest slanders almost fail to excite even a passing feeling of annoyance. They are too insignificant, and getting to be so even in their own eyes, to be worthy of any feeling except indifference.

This last effort of theirs to malign the people of Utah is so outrageously mendacious that it will have the opposite effect from what they desired. Those who might have been inclined to give some credence to their statements heretofore, will become cautious; though there is a class of sensational scribblers who will publish anything that is likely to excite attention for the moment, irrespective of its probability. Very likely those who furnish "reliable information" about Utah may feel inclined to draw it more mildly for a time, till the remembrance of this last batch of "Authentic intelligence" has been measurably forgotten.