

# MRS. SEWALL TO THE DESERET NEWS

on a Letter to the Editor She Defends Mormon Women Against Unjust Attacks.

### MORMONISM NOT POLYCAMY.

Good Women She Has Met and Their Influence Upon Society ond Women's Organizations.

110 11 11 11

Editor of the Deseret News. During the last three months, I have received several scores of letters bearreceived several scores of active or ing upon what is generally referred to ing upon what is generally referred to as "The Mormon Question." The sub-divisions into which these communica-tions may be grouped, according to the character of their contents and the character of their contents and tone, may be inferred from the points upon which their writers have chal-

upon which their writers have chain-lenged me, which in turn may be in-dicated briefly as follows: 1. How can I reconcile myself to as-sociation with "Mormons?" 2. What effect do I think the presence of "Mormon" associations in the National Council of Women must have son the character of the council as a

. Do I realize my responsibility for

a. Do I realize my responsibility for the degeneracy of current ophion and practile in respect to marriage?
a. Are the women of Indiana more patifierent to domestic purity than wo-men of the rest of the country?
b. Do the women of the National Council realize that Christian women will be obliged to withdraw from it, if "Mormons" remain within it?
All of these questions imply that my worrespondents confuse "Mormonism" correspondents contribe another mannament with polygamy, and treat the former as if the latter were an essential in-deed an indispensible element of it, This has never been, nor is yet my opinion. I have believed that plural "Mormolism" in the present era, that the system of concubinage bore to maropinion. the system of concubinage bore to mar-riage in the time of the patriarchs was due to two causes; to that "bardness of heart" which our Father, God, seems always to have taken into account in dealing with His children; and to con-temporary economic and sociological conditions. As the evolutionary procers bore the Hebrews into a finer cers bore the Hebrews into a finer civilization and a higher spiritual de-velopment, plural marringe fell navelopment, putral marriage tell na-iurally away, until for many hundreds of years, no one has thought of asso-clating plural marriage with the He-brew faith. I have believed that plural marriage to Brigham Young and his followers (isolated first by persecution ich drove then into a deseret, and and by their gelf-assumed task of which dre transforming that desert into a garden as due to the same causes and woul on of corresponding influences the same maner fall away from

Notwithstanding the disclosures made readers of the Latter-day Saints beare the Congressional commission ap-mined to institute inquiry into present s. I believe that plural marage, although both proven and con-seed to be still existing, exists now as the exception and not as the rule, and that the support of it by members of the "Mormon" Church is rather that kind of support which people are wort, because of family pride or sect loyalty.



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## TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY.

#### (DO YOU REMEMBER?)

Fred Hopt was sentenced to be shot at the penitentiary on June 13, for the

murder of Turner. The attraction at the theater was Mrs. Langtry in "Pygmallon and Ga-Intea."

#### TEN YEARS AGO TODAY.

Dr. Millspaugh was elected superintendent of the city schools. While trying to navigate the swollen Platte river near Denver, a large number of Coxeyites were drowned. Only five bodies were recovered, but it was thought 59 had perished.

#### FIVE YEARS AGO TODAY.

The cabinet was discussing the necessity of another call for volunteers to put down the Filipino insurrection,

Sheriff Hazen, who was shot by train robbers in Wyoming, died, and the bandits escaped, though it was supposed they were surrounded.

The Tribune sprung its memorable Charles Mostyn Owen fake on polygamy in Spanish Fork.

when in 1889 application to enter the , cial board of the national council since when in 1889 application to enter the National Council of Women of the United States came to the first official board of the national council since its organization, and feeling all of the cordiality which I have expressed to-ward the two associations of "Mormon" women the headquarters of which are in Salt Lake City. I feel it very neces-sary that there should be no misunrejecting the applicants. I looked upon their entrance into the council as a means of bringing them into relations with social opinions and social prac-tises which would render the resump-

tion of polygamy among them impos-sible. Miss Frances E. Willard, at that time president of the National Council, entertained the same view. The Ed-mund's bill having become a law, Utah having been admitted into the Union as a peer of other states on condition of conformity to the doctrine and law of monogamic marriage. I felt that the question of their religious faith should

of service to the body politic. marriage will be stamped out only by proving to those who entertain it as a correct theory, who regard it as a vi cation for those who are especiall called to it, that it is a false doctrine in will be eradicated only by bringing those who practise it in contact with the nobler ideals concerning domestic the nonier ideals concerning domestic life, which so far as I know are enter-tained as ideals and as doctrines by all other divisions ' of the Christian church, whatever sad digressions we may witness in practise among them. Having been asked by a body outside of any National Council of Women to of any National Council of Women to present, before the International Coun-cil at its approaching Quinquennial at Berlin, a Resolution excluding the two societies mainly composed of "Mormon" women from the National Council of Women of the United States, I feel called upon to explain the structure of the International Council. The societies which I am asked to be instru-mental in having excluded from the International Council are members of it through their membership in the Na-tional Council of the United States, and tional Council of the United States, and the latter is the only body which can legislate in respect to its members. Should accusations be brought against any individual or any organization, questioning her or its eligibility to membership in the National Council, the latter has the power to investigate, and should it be discovered that un-worthy individuals or unworthy or-ganizations are within its membership, it, of course, has the power to expel , of course, has the power to expel I remember that some years ago President Eliot of Harvard university suffered an almost violent attack b the press of the country, because some thing which he had said in a speec

thing which he had said in a speech delivered upon the social conditions which he found prevailing in Utah, seemed to imply that the "Mormon" is the peer and the parallel of the Puri-tan. Certainly nothing is gained by disguising the truth; nothing is gained by understating the virtues and over-stating the defects of those who are dif-forent from ourselves. In 1901 L spent stating the defects of those who are dif-ferent from ourselves. In 1901 I spent some time in Salt Lake City, Provo, and other points in Utah. All that I saw and heard confirmed the opinions that I have expressed in this letter, and I was amazed at the Puritanic forms which prevailed in family and social life. In the family in which I was entertained, the youngest children —a boy of nine, and a little girl of sev-en-were as capable of pronouncing en-were as capable of pronouncing "grace before meat" as any clergyman whom I ever saw lead in that ceremony. whom I ever saw lead in that ceremony. The one member of the household who did not with apparent perfect uncon-sclousness take his turn in the grace before and the thanksgiving after a meal and in family prayers night and morning, was the eldest son who was just graduated from an eastern univer-sity. His mother deplored the lax opinions and the careless religious hab-its which he had acquired in his New England associations. This family was ardently "Mormon," but no mem-ber of it had ever lived in plural mar-riage. Of course, it can easily be said that this family was an exception, as ber of it had ever lived in plurat mar-riage. Of course, it can easily be said that this family was an exception, as it probably was in wealth and intelli-gence as well as in rigid religious train-ing; but the religious habit seemed to be the universal habit of mind among both men and women. To them, as to me, polygamy appeared to be rather an incident in the historic evolution of their faith, than a form essential to its their faith, than a form essential to its continuance

I cannot leave this part of my letter I cannot leave this part of my letter without paying what I consider a de-served tribute to the "Mormon" women whom I have most intimately known. I consider it a privilege to have known upon this important question. From my first knowledge of the existence of polygamy in "Mormonism," I felt that the United States government was committing a great crime by harboring such an anarchronism, however dis-tant and undeveloped the state in which it was permitted to grow up. I rejoiced over the enactment of the Edmunds Bill, belleving that by it the United 'States government was com-mitted to the eradication of polygamy, To the world's fair without change To the world's fair without change. The Pullman Palace car that goes via Burlington Route leaves Salt Lake daily 3:15 p. m. Call or write and get particulars. R. F. Neslen, General Agent, 79 west Second South street. most famous of the early exponents of this doctrine. I am proud and grate-ful to count among my friends. I have found them women of exceptional abilnot because polygamy was an accom-paniment of this, or that, or the other eligious doctrine, but because it was a violation of what is fundamental i the law throughout the entire country ability which comes from thinking ha tually upon serious and important sul since however various the marriage laws in the different states, they are all alike in their recognition of the monogamic as the only possible legal marriage. I have always, however, tually upon serious and important sub-lects; women of perfect delicacy of nind and habit; women of lofty aspir-tions and capable of giving themselves n generous service for the betterment of the community. I cannot blame these vomen for being unwilling to attest half helds in monogamy by reprachfound it necessary to the maintenance of intellectual honesty and spiritual sincerity to distinguish, as I have said their belief in monogamy by reproach-ing the memories of their fathers and their grandfathers. To my mind the best proof they can give of their belief in the monogamic marriage, is that in the beginning of this letter, between polygamy and "Mormonism." "Mormonism" is to my mind, merely one of the many sects into which modthey have formed such marriage, is that they have formed such marriages and that they live chastely and lovingly, bearing and rearing their children in the fear and knowledge of the Lord. To my mind, recognizing that we are all ern Christians are divided; Polygamy, merely an incident, the product of economic conditions now vanishing, whose entire extinction will be has-tened by the mingling of "Mormous" and Gentiles. I do not assert that this of us the results of the evolutionary process, a process devised, created, and directed by Him whom we call by dif-ferent names but who, by whatever name He may be called in any part of view cannot be a mistaken one and that the corollaries deduced from the main proposition upon which my conduct has been based, cannot be erroneous. the world, is recognized as Foundah and Goal of the human soul; recogniz-ing that every one of us exhibits a dif-ferent degree of illumination at differ-ent periods of her individual or of he nerely state what my opinions are and what they have been. Of course, if I thought them erroneous, I should abandon them for new ones, since I by no means consider that person con-sistent who never changes her mind, social development, we ought to have sufficient confidence in the inherent charms of the monogamic relation, to but rather she who changes her mind according to the dictates of new charms of the nonogamic relation, to believe that by contact with those whose antecdents have been different, and certainly less desirable than our own, we may win them from whatever danger there may still exist of their failing into ancient errors. I now come to the last point which I wish to discuss, namely: "Where resis and to punish all offenders, but I shall consider that the offender can only be Thow come to the last point which i wish to discuss, namely: "Where rests the responsibility for the degeneracy of current opinion and current practise in respect to marriage?" From my point of view, much of this degeneracy pro-ceeds from the fact that women have assumed that they alone are to be the maintainers of the home, the protectors of the varies of the home, them protectors consider that the offender can only be an individual and not a sect, and that every individual case must be in-vestigated upon its merit and decided by the revelations following the in-vestigation. At the time of the Rob-erts case, I was myself the presiding officer of the mational council. The vote upon the resolution which was brought before the council was an "aye" and "nay" vote. The records will show that I supported the resolu-tion to petition Congress to exclude maintainers of the nume, the protectors of its purity, that upon them rests the responsibility for preserving the insti-tution which is so dear to them. I would excuse no woman for any light-ness of view or any laxness of pracresponsibility for the pure home to which I hold women, to that would I unyieldingly hold men. With the deepset sympathy with what the women desire vho have been passing condemnatory

resolutions of Smoot and of "Mormons" EXCURSION RATES en masse, I feel that much of their agi tation has been harmful instead of help Via Oregon Short Line. ful to the cause of purity which they have espoused, and of which women are indeed, as is said over and over again, the natural advocates. There has been much hysteria, much sectarian preju-

St. Louis and return via Chicago. 50.00 Limit 60 days. Transit limit ten days much hysteria, much sectarian preju-dice, and not a little unpleasant, how-ever, unconscious Pharisaism in what has been written and said by women upon this subject. I have never heard a discussion involving a comparison of the purity of the monogamic with the plural marriage in which the assump-tion on behalf of the former could not be partied by retoris too well sustained in each direction Tickets on sale Tuesdays and Fri-days each week. Stop overs allower.

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o whatever their fathers have one than to any genuine approval of practise under present conditions To the first query of my correspond-ents I would reply that I have never for a moment foured that the membership of "Mormon" women, even of large as-sociations of "Mormon" women, in the National Council of the United States would have any deteriorating effect up-

on the character of the council. I have always believed and still be lieve that the best way of correcting a false doctrine is by bringing it into immediate contact with the true doc-trine to which it is opposed, and that the most direct method of exhibiting e weakness or the sinfulness inherent the weakness of the sinfulness inhorent in any theory or in any practise, is to bring it face to face with its antithesis. For example: I have always felt that missionary effort would be much more effectively carried forward by bringing people whom we wish to convert people whom we wish to convert to Christian faith and Christian practise nto a country where such practise and faith prevail than by any other method. This statement suggests the motives and line of reasoning under whose immon" women, when they presented themselves for membership in organiza-

tions chiefly composed of Gentiles. The first time that I was confronted with the necessity for a decision was in with the necessity for a decision was in 1881, when I was the chairman of the executive committee of the National Woman's Suffrage association. Dele-gates from the Utah Suffrage associa-tion came to Washington and presented their credentials. Their credentials con-formad in every particular to constitu-tional in every particular to constitu-tional in every particular to constitu-tional requirements, and I confees I was estonished to learn that some very exastonished to learn that some very ex-cellent woman felt that they should not be admitted to the executive sessions or to the platform of the National Wo-man's Sufferen mans' Suffrage association because elr belog "Mormons." Among these legates were women who had lived in polygamy, but they were no longer thus living; and there were others who were neither born in the institution of plural marriage nor were they parties to it in their own homes. To me it seemed that we had no refit to incurre ied that we had no right to inquire the religious faith or the domestic tions of any woman who was sent sate from an affiliated state or torial suffrage association to sit usation made should against an individual on speci-Against an individual on speci-id, and that if an individual a proven to be morally unwor-le position as an individual, she se rejected, but the rejection of rejected, but the rejection of adividual should be entirely ed from the Church of which member. The position then ne that I have since steadily we not been able to see that position was either Christian or compatible with the Amproeffect or compatible with the Amer-i doctrine of freedom of conscience respect to religious faith. So, later,



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e raised in respect to 'Mor mons," than in respect to Methodists, Presbyterians, Eniscopalians, Unitar-ians, or Universalists—all of whom were numerously represented in the counc at that time; since these women did no come into the council as "Mormons," but as representatives of educational and philanthropic societies.

A few weeks ago a friend showed me A few weeks ago a friend showed me a letter from a member of the execu-tive board of the Interdenominational Council of Women, in which my name was used in a new and most surprising connection. The letter stated that it was generally understood that Senator Beveridge of Indiana was favorable to the seating of Mr. Smoot of Utah in the United States senate, and that he had said that the women of Indiana were favorable to Smoot, and that he were favorable to Smoot, and that he had further used my name as that of a leader of Indiana women who was favorable to Senator Smoot. As there had never passed a word between Sen-ator Beveridge and myself upon this question, and as this letter ascribed to me relate the second of the second question, and as this letter ascribed to me views entirely opposed to views which I hold and to opinions which I have steadily expressed upon this ques-tion, I did not believe that Senator Beveridge had made the remarks as-cribed to him. I, therefore, wrote him directly quoting from the letter in ques-tion the passages referring to his views and to myself, and received from him the reply anticipated, namely-that in the first place as he was acting then in a judicial capacity, he had no right either to have or to express views upon the question of Mr. Smoot's eligibility to the genate; and that as a matter of knowledge and new perceptions is con-sistent. Until such new knowledge comes, I shall maintain that it is the business of the United States govern-ment to see that its laws are obeyed. the question of Mr. Smoot's eligibility to the senate; and that as a matter of fact he had never ascelood to the women of Indiana or to myself, the views attributed to us in the letter. I can assure all of my correspondents that the women of Indiana are not only "not more indifferent to domestic purity than the women of the rest of the coun-try," but that if there is any difference in the respect for domestic purity, en-tertained by women of different states, I should believe that the women of Indi tertained by women of different states, I should believe that the women of Indi-ana would be found to have not only an actual high standard, but a relative very high standard in this partfeular, and so far as my own views may be supposed to have any weight in Indi-ata, they are not only in behalf of "do-mestic purity," but I must confess to having very rigid standards. Ordinarity it birth seem an exhibi-

tion to petition Congress to exclude Roberts, because I believed that it was not only proven but confessed that he was a violator of almost the most im-portant law that could be passed conportant law that could be passed con-cerning the absolutely most important relation of life, and I believed that such a violator of the law was unfit to oc-cupy a seat in our law-making body. To my correspondents who ask whether I do not realize that "Chris-tian women will be obliged to with-draw from the council, if "Mormona" are permitted to remain in it"--I can only say that I make no such distinc-tion between Christians and "Mor-mons:" on the contrary I find that "Christian" is the generic term includ-ing "Mormon" along with Wesleyan Ordinarily, it light seem an exhibi-tion of vanity to "rush into print" with one's views upon this subject, but I feel that the time has come for an avowal of mine, although I know that they will be most unpopular, and prob-ably equally so with both "Mormons" and Gentiles, I believe not only in the monogamic as the only form of mar riage compatible with an ideal home serving the highest spiritual development, but I further believe that monog ing "Mormon" along with Wesleyan and Lutheran and Calvinist and a host

of other sects named for their found-ers. I believe that plural marriage could amic marriage, having once been en-tered inib, should never be dissolved until dissolved by death. It was only by reason of "the hardness of their never have grown up in a community of a composite religious faith, and that what ever brings "Mormons"—or as they choose to call themselves. "Latter-day Saints,"—out of their exclusive as-sociation with one another, out of their what even is environ isolation. Into with dissolved by death. It was only by reason of "the hardness of their hearts" that Christ permitted divorce for the one reason of physical infidelity I believe that no longer should "the hardness" of their hearts be used as a justification of divorce under any circumstances. Men and wo-men counseling as peers might be able to devise a system of marriage and of legal separation which would be in har-mony with the highest civilization, but, from my point of view, the sort of sep-aration called "divorce" which per-mits the remarriage of either the wife or husband during the life of the other could be no feature of such a revised system of our marriage and separation laws. Probably no one out-side of a small circle of family and social intimates is so familiar with iny opinions upon this subject as are the leading "Mormon" women, with several of whom I have not only had frequent and long conversations upon the subject, but with at least two of whom I have had in years past ex-tended correspondence. Banding as I do as one of the offisocial as well as spiritual isolation, into Absolutely Perfect Food

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be partied by retorts too well sustained by many features of modern social life, climaxed by the records of the divorce

courts. True it is that such retorts are no excuse, no palliative for the blighting system of plural marriage, bu

that system can be won from it only by being met in a truly Christian spirit which is the spirit of love; that spirit which 'if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise," dwells upon "whatsoever things are true, whatso-ever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." that spirit which seeks to kill that which is offensive by ignoring it. Wo-men ought to have power as well as in-direct influence, and if all women, who realize defects in the present laws and in the present administration of the laws which affect the home, could be united in working to get the ballot--that instrument of power which would lift them from the position of autorian at the fort of the provent of

would lift them from the position supplicant at the feet of the voter, the voting class—they would be doin

vastly more for domestic and soci purity than they can do by signin petitions all their lives. Let us he treat men as if they had no respons billty for the domestic situation, what

ever it may be good or bad. At the present time men are more responsible than women, since they alone have the

than women, since they alone have the power to frame laws according to their convictions and to execute the laws which they have framed. In a right state of society women would have with men equal power, and men would feel that their responsibility for the purity of the home was not less than the responsibility of women.

than the responsibility of women. Personally I always rejoice at every manifestation by women of public spirit, of interest in any public ques-tlin. I am one of those who think that it is better that women should

that it is better that women should discuss questions of public moment in judiciously, than not to discuss ther at all. I am, therefore, glad of th attention which the Smoot case ha attracted among women. I would no however, have women assume that th purity of the home rests with them The home proceeds from a double foun tain, and it will never be an institu-tion of unalloyed purity, so long as on of the fountains yields blitter wate

of the fountains yields bitter wat and the other sweet. I rejoice in t attention which this case has attract

attention which this case has attract among women, because I hope that a timately charity, instead of arrogan will be promoted by the discussion the questions at issue, and that ul-mately women, finding how vain a petitions with no votes back of the will see that the vote is needed for t protection of the home, and needed 1 her own as queen of the home may n

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