

### "MORMONISM" AS IT IS.

A NUMBER of American papers explain to their readers that "Mormonism" is destroyed; because "polygamy was all there was of 'Mormonism,' and this having come to an end there is nothing of it left but its property." Polygamy and "Mormonism" are synonymous, some of them assert. Others say, "'Mormonism' was only held together by faith in the righteousness of polygamy."

These remarks are further illustrations of the invincible ignorance of most editors in the United States concerning a system which has attracted greater attention than any other in this century. It is marvelous that so few persons who write and speak about it know anything concerning its principles, its spirit and its history.

The doctrine of plural marriage was not revealed to the Church until 1843, and was not publicly proclaimed until 1852. Previous to these dates the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the "Mormon" Church, organized April 6, 1830, had penetrated to most of the States of the Union and into the British Isles, and had made many thousands of converts and passed through most of its terrible persecutions. Its doctrines had been fought and ridiculed and its people plundered, driven and misrepresented. Polygamy was not, and could not be, even alleged as the cause of the fierce opposition to its teachings, or the excuse for mistreating its followers.

It is evident, then, that "Mormonism" and polygamy are not synonymous, that "Mormonism" will not necessarily perish because plural marriages cease to be solemnized, and that faith in something more than the "righteousness of polygamy held Mormonism together" before plural marriage was adopted and may hold it together now that it is forbidden.

It may surprise some of the "enlighteners of the world" to know, that the terms "Mormonism" and "polygamy" have no essential relation. The word "Mormonism" is a nickname for the system which has grown out of the doctrines of the Book of Mormon. That record of the early inhabitants of America is an abridgment of prophetic and historical writings, containing mainly the same doctrines, simply taught, as Christ delivered to His people in Palestine. But there is this peculiarity about it: According

to this book the ancient dwellers on this land were not considered worthy to have plural families like some of their Asiatic progenitors, but were commanded of God to have but one wife and no concubines. So that the word "Mormonism," so far as it is derived from the word "Mormon," cannot be construed as meaning polygamy, and, indeed, by some opponents has been considered to mean the very opposite.

Putting polygamy aside, the fundamental principles of "Mormonism," which attracted the people who have embraced it in many lands, remain undisturbed and unimpeached. They form a system of theology which is more comprehensive, scriptural, rational and consistent than any other in all the world. These principles have been attacked, derided, repudiated and held up to scorn, but have never been controverted either by reason or scripture. They have scarcely ever been given a fair field, but where this has been accorded they have ever been victorious.

"Mormonism" embraces all the great questions which have agitated Christendom as subjects of religious controversy. And it has solved these problems so as to settle them definitely and satisfactorily to those who have accepted it as a religious system. Being rooted in revelation, that is, living, present continuous Divine revelation, it is a vital, growing and developing system, adapted and adapting itself to the needs of progressing and diversified humanity in every land and of succeeding generations.

Plural marriage has not been permitted under its regulations except by authority of the head of the Church, who alone holds the keys of this power according to the revelation which made its principles known to the Church. He has forbidden further plural marriages, by virtue of that authority, and therefore there is no inconsistency or improper subservience in the acceptance by the Church of his Declaration to this effect. And it is a demonstrated fact that the great majority of the members have never entered into that relation.

The principle of celestial, that is eternal, marriage is one of the grandest and most sublime doctrines ever made known to man. By this we mean the union, under Divine authority, of a man and woman for ever. This is the order of marriage which united Adam and Eve in Paradise before there was any

death within or upon them, and was therefore an eternal covenant, entered into by immortals, and binding upon them eternally. The death that came by transgression was remedied by the Savior. And the parents of the race, restored by the atonement from the effects of the fall, stand in the resurrection exactly as they were when first united, with the benefits of experience added to their knowledge of good and evil.

Under a similar covenant, sealed in heaven because sealed on earth by Divine authority, a man and a woman so united are husband and wife for ever, and though death may part them the separation is but temporary, and Christ's redemption will place them side by side in the eternal world, at the head of their posterity and an everlasting kingdom. This blessing is, of course, on condition of fitness and faithfulness to each other and fidelity to God and His commandments, for all blessings are predicated upon obedience to Divine law.

The strait path to eternal life and glory is marked out by "Mormonism." Commencing with the fundamental principle of faith it proceeds to repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ His Son, the fellowship of the Saints, the victory over Satan, the subduing of the flesh, the overcoming of the world, and the preparation for the society of the redeemed and sanctified, to whom the angels are but ministers while the glorified Saints are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ their elder brother.

Connected with these principles are many others that relate to time and to eternity, comprehending the dealings of God with humanity from the beginning to the end of time, in all ages and among all races; the gathering of the elect; the building up of Zion; the redemption of Israel; the restitution of all things; the coming of Christ to reign, and the restoration of the earth to its pristine beauty and perfection, whereon righteousness shall dwell and the Father shall make His tabernacle. These are some of the doctrines of "Mormonism" which remain and abide, and are independent of "property" and beyond the reach of human scorn and human force.

The power that "holds Mormonism together" is faith, not in one tenet or principle, but in the Divine origin of the system and a Divine Spirit bestowed upon every one who