

(Written for Pomeroy's Democrat.)

EVANGELIZING MORMONISM.

BY HENRY CROUSE, HOT SPRINGS, UTAH.

In a recent issue of *Pomeroy's Democrat* a distinguished doctor of divinity, who has taken upon himself the laudable vocation of addressing the throne of sectarian godliness, at Salt Lake City, for a living, laments over "the failure of the Christian churches to make any impression upon adult Mormons, and that nearly all their attempts to evangelize Mormonism have been failures."

I have waited patiently for some potent pen to indicate the reasons of this failure, but as none have yet met my observation I respectfully ask your indulgence for a few reflections with the view to induce others more thoroughly informed, to give the needed explanations.

As a non-sectarian observer, during a few years residence here, I have become convinced that all the usual attempts to evangelize Mormonism may as well be abandoned as hopeless. The Mormons, as well as all other enlightened people, know that all true adherents, of the genuine "Christian church" both cherish and manifest an active regard or a self-evidently sincere concern for the physical, moral and spiritual welfare of each and every member of the human family. But what can be thought of that preacher's regard for frail, sinful mortals—the errors of benighted "Mormons," when his pharisaical sanctity revolts at eating at the same table with adult "Mormons," for fear their religious sincerity of faith should contaminate his ecclesiastical sanctimoniousness.

Is it any wonder that such a preacher, with such pharisaical notions of self-righteousness should fail to impress adult "Mormons?" The most casual observer of unprejudiced mind cannot but see that greed, lust of gain, actual covetousness, is the predominant motive which prompts the "Christian" attempt to evangelize "Mormonism."

What care these evangelizing missionaries for the salvation of a Mormon's soul, further than to exile him to Mexico or into the penitentiary, so that they can possess themselves and their fellow "Liberal" religio-political freebooters of the farms and dwellings, the orchards and cattle, the grain and the costly public buildings which have been produced by "Mormon" industry, economy, and often by the most pinching frugality? They care about as much as certain "military officers" from Fort Cameron, cared for the civil rights of a poor man with a large helpless family at Hot Springs about two years since, when they robbed him of six dollars worth of grain and provisions for themselves and "U. S." military horses, and shot and killed his chickens under the roof of his private dwelling house, because the chicken's cackling "bothered" their whiskey-befuddled brains. And when the military commandant of the Fort was apprized of the fact, he virtually sanctioned the robbery on the plea that some other military thief had stolen a gun, which theft, in military equity constituted an equitable claim. This scrupulous custodian of Uncle Sam's guns, when an honest debt was to be left unpaid, was excessively conscientious, especially when its non-payment could be employed as a proxy punishment of the theft of an ex-soldier thief. But when a certain New Mexico emigrant asked him for and received from him a government gun with the special admonition that he need never return it, then, his scrupulous solicitude became significantly apparent.

As a casual non-sectarian student of the "Mormon" faith, as taught by their religious teachers, and religious books of instruction, I have become impressed with the assurance that intelligent and conscientious "Mormons" have other very consistent and, to them, all sufficient reasons for rejecting the attempts of a popular declaimer of modern churchianity, to induce them to desert their religious faith. The sincere and honest adherents of "Mormonism" affirm that they positively know that their religion is true, and that the consequent evangelic signs, as defined by Mark, invariably attend all genuine disciples. These attendant signs are, to the "Mormons," positive proof of the divine origin of their religious faith. Hence it is unreasonable to suppose that intelligent and unpretending "Mor-

mons" should abandon their own real, to them, tangible religious faith, and blindly grasp at something exclusively imaginary, ethereal and vague. Consider, for example, the popular churchianian's virtual definition of the God they profess to worship—"a being without body, parts or passions, seated on the top of a topless throne, located somewhere beyond the bounds of time and space"—an immaterial nonentity, and an incomprehensible absurdity, like their popular abode for their devils, bottomless pit. These are a few of the reasons, as I understand them, why "Christian churches fail to evangelize Mormonism."

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