

EDITORIALS.

[COMMUNICATED.]

CANNIBALISM OF THE FAMILY.

THERE is nothing so interesting as the family organization; it is called the family circle because it is meant to be united, without angles and corners, or protuberances of any kind; it is intended to be sound, smooth and harmonious. To be sure it is made up of individuals, and these may have many peculiarities, but these are understood, and the spirit of affection induces restraint, prevents offense, and gives mutual interest in and for each other. Every thoughtful representative of a family cherishes a good deal of pride in regard to his posterity; he wishes them well, he labors with and for them, educating, clothing and providing as far as possible every gratification. Laborious days and sleepless nights, continued vigilance in regard to improper associations and unhalloved influences, are but a portion of that parental interest which is exemplified even in the "Gentile" world.

But among the "Mormons" there is certainly a more intense and abiding interest than their neighbors can possess. The former believes that the family is of divine origin, that it is the result of special blessing, and that it is eternal in its nature, an enduring order, that in fact a man's family are at once his glory and his crown.

Now with this view comes a more weighty responsibility as to the formation of its character here in this probation, and the head expects obedience, prays for peace, believes in order, while every thought and all his ambition centre in the desire to have these desirable traits made manifest continually; for this is his home, his heaven, his all. True it is written that "a man's foes shall be those of his own household," but every man in Israel ardently hopes that peace and unity will be round about his hearthstone, and that no enemy from there shall be the willing or unwilling instrument in the fulfillment of so lamentable a truth.

In the pursuit of this unity most men find that prior experience is inadequate to what appears to be the necessities of some occasions; many things are done which are only experiments, wisdom may not always preside, (that is the critic's wisdom) but that man is more than a fool, who does not desire peace and order as well as work to make it.

Some are fools enough to believe that family difficulties are only known in Utah, that everything elsewhere is bright and peaceful, that no far, no contention, no rebellion, no divorce, intrude their unwelcome presence into the families of the "Gentile" world. But those who have travelled and lived there know what are the elements of social life both on this continent and in Europe.

There are others who claim that every wrangling spirit in Utah is born of polygamous marriage, which is also very far from the truth, and indeed, when the origin of many of our difficulties is really reached, it will be found that they grew in so-called "Christian" homes, in so-called "Christian" families, and in so-called "Christian" lands, and few can comprehend that a large proportion of the little difficulty which exists in Utah, is positively an evidence of that educational friction which belongs inevitably to a radical change of ideas, convictions and practices.

And of these few difficulties which, cropping out and coming to the surface, become in a measure, public property, how few there are which really evoke that healthy sympathy, that manly regret, that willing silence which calamity should arouse! For it is a calamity, sad indeed when family squabbles and disagreements lose themselves from the circle where they originate, and help to infuse by gossip, tale-bearing and tattle, one of the most virulent enemies to confidence and peace which can find an entrance into any community.

But beyond all this there is still a lower depth to which some in this

community can descend in these matters, and that is to give public utterance to a feeling of satisfaction, when disintegration exists in any family of this city. These writers speak of division as if it was a crowning virtue, they applaud disobedience as if it was the highest attribute of boyhood or early manhood or womanhood, and they gloat over the intense and burning words of a parent who is called to witness the overthrow of his "household gods."

Yet this is called patriotism, it is called reform, it is said to be Christianity, which thus fattens upon the oil that such persons think they scent; but every such spirit thus demonstrates that it is of hell, and there is nothing so contemptible, so unmanly, nothing which savors so strongly of scoundrelism, damnable in all its features, as this chuckling, sneering, ghoul-like satisfaction at every slight evidence of insubordination to "Mormon" parental authority and rule. They who thus write are traitors to the best interests of society; they are the unfaltering enemies of good order and righteous family government; and every man who aids and abets in this direction will live to pay the fearful penalty of seeking to overthrow an order established by divine revelation and commandment.

Mark these assassins of the family relationship; follow their footsteps, and it will be seen that they lead down to hell; consider the demoralization which would come to you and yours, if your sons and daughters are thus lauded and counted as martyrs, because the discipline which belongs to every well-regulated family, whether of Jew or Gentile, bond or free, is incorporated into your faith and practice, and becomes far more desirable because of the inspirational assurance of the perpetuity and enduring character of the family circle. Let those who are thus maligning, brook the traitorous insult as best they may, they can have the assurance of the faith and sympathy of the great heart of a mighty people; and the prayers of those who thus sympathize will find passage to the heavens, until God's gladsome benediction shall fall upon every stricken heart, and the voice of many a returning prodigal will yet give the lie to the wishes and expressions of the corrupt, unprincipled and barbarous cannibals of the family.

INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR.

THE New York Sun of Oct. 20th has the following account of an interview with Pres. John Taylor, by one of its correspondents, a French gentleman of education and culture, now engaged in business in Wall Street, the great financial centre of the country. He has evidently aimed to be accurate, and has succeeded to a far greater extent than most persons who attempt to enlighten the world on "Mormon" affairs. We publish the letter in *extenso*, but have inserted in brackets a few corrections of manifest errors which however we are satisfied were not intentional. The letter will doubtless prove of interest to the large majority of our readers:

SALT LAKE CITY,
October 2, 1879.

The successor of Brigham Young, President John Taylor, transacts all his business in the same office which served the departed Mormon potentate. It is an old-fashioned, one-story house, standing within the heavy stone wall, which begins at the Tithe house and ends at Young's private residence. The single large room suggests, in appearance and furniture, a lawyer's office or the study of a prosperous German professor. It is lighted from the ceiling through a large cupola, inside of which hang oil paintings of various Mormon celebrities, from Joseph and Hyrum Smith downward. If the portraits are good likenesses, the Latter-day Saints cannot boast of the looks of their leaders. Most of them look like English bar keepers or petty grocers in their Sunday clothes. The only attractive head among them is that of John W. Young, the eldest son of the late prophet. He has quite a worldly face, combining

the features of Mr. J. G. Bennett with the moustache of Mr. Wm. Heath, Vanderbilt's favorite broker.

The Youngs seem to have but little influence upon Mormonism at the present moment. The general verdict in Salt Lake is that the family is played out. Possibly the suits which one of the daughters brought against the Trustees of the Church has something to do with it. In any case very little notice is taken of the family nowadays, and J. W. Young himself has left Salt Lake City for his ranch and farm in Arizona. [The gentleman has undoubtedly drawn this conclusion from statements made by persons who desire to misrepresent, through antipathy to our late President and his name and connections.]

President Taylor seems to be very easy of access to members of his Church. But strangers cannot obtain a chance of conversing with him unless properly introduced. He seems to be shy of Gentile visitors, and remains very reticent unless satisfied that he runs no risk in talking about the affairs of his Church and his people. A portion of his office is partitioned off by means of a screen, forming an ante room, in which one or two clerks are always on duty examining visitors before they allow them to pass any further. But when President Taylor has agreed to receive a stranger he does it very graciously, with an amiable smile and a cordial shake of the hand.

In appearance he is a man about six feet high and some seventy years of age, with a handsome gray head, and an intelligent face, framed in neatly trimmed side whiskers. On the whole he closely resembles Mr. Royal Phelps, although he is not quite so corpulent. There is also a similarity in the manner of the two men, and in their linguistic versatility. The French of Mr. Taylor is almost as fluent as the Spanish of Mr. Phelps. And it is not conversational only; during his residence in Europe, as a Mormon missionary, Mr. Taylor published several works on Mormonism in French, including a translation of their book of Revelations. [The Book of Mormon.]

The conversation of Mr. Taylor has all the ease and elegance of a thorough man of the world. Even in uttering the most fanatical views he speaks quietly, uses the mildest expressions, and preserves a constant smile on his lips. The occasional sarcasms at the expense of the Gentiles are as fine as those of a consummate diplomatist. Anybody meeting him in a railroad car or in a hotel in Europe, would never suspect him to be what he is. His appearance, manners and speech are those of an old member of the British Parliament or of a wealthy, retired English banker.

Naturally the conversation first turned on Mr. Evarts' anti-Mormon circular. Mr. Taylor expressed utter disbelief in the possibility of the government having taken any such step. He considered it utterly ridiculous. Apart from that, he said, it was equivalent to asking the interference of foreign powers in the home affairs of the United States. A little republic like that of Switzerland might have recourse to such a step if overrun by undesirable religious or political refugees. But it was pitiable to see the government of a powerful nation asking for assistance to prevent the emigration of the few thousand people who yearly leave the old world in search of the free exercise of their religious convictions. The step was also a useless one, for the more obstacles put in the way of Mormon emigrants, the more earnest would become the efforts of the Mormon Church to overcome these obstacles.

An allusion to the rumor that it has been decided in Washington to set on foot a systematic judicial prosecution of polygamists evoked a contemptuous smile. "Let them try it," said Mr. Taylor; "we have no objection to their sending as many lawyers and soldiers here as they please, if they have them to spare for such expeditions. Polygamy is with us a matter of revelation, besides being, as we believe it to be, a natural law, which ruled the ancient world, which still rules the life of millions and millions of people on the globe, and which is the very basis of life of the whole animal kingdom. One sure thing is that we will not surrender polygamy. If it ever dies out it will die a natural death, which will consequently be the result of the will of God. But no power of men can

eradicate it from our Church. They can imprison or shoot any number of us; there will be always somebody left to carry on the work. We have the best possible hierarchy in constant working order. As far as the organization of the Church goes, it did not make a particle of difference that Joseph Smith was murdered or that Brigham Young died. I took the latter's place, as somebody else will take mine, and as somebody else will in due time take that of my successor. There will always be somebody to stand in the breach, and no Gentile assault will ever shake the foundations of our hierarchy."

Upon my suggesting to him that the general belief was that polygamy was introduced by Brigham Young, and that Joseph Smith never alluded to it in his teachings, he said:

"That is a profound mistake. Joseph Smith had many reasons for not making a cardinal point of it; but he considered it an intrinsic part of the revelation. I was with him both before and at the time of his death. I received four of the many bullets which were destined for him, and I ought to know something concerning his view of the subject. He left it to his successors to work out this part of the revelation, for he knew that it would be a much easier task for them than for him. The late Brigham Young carried out this point admirably. When we came to Utah we wanted to people our land, and the beehive placed on the top of his house has more meaning than you would have supposed by looking at it."

A great many of the arguments which Mr. Taylor adduced in support of polygamy are not of a nature to be discussed in a newspaper, but the sincerity and the earnestness with which he brought them forward were so evident that they precluded me from asking him the indiscreet question, "And how many wives have you?" The Mohammedans don't make a secret of it, but with the Mormons a question of this kind is never asked, for the simple reason that a truthful answer to it would be equivalent to the confession of an offence against the laws of the land. The general belief among the Gentiles of Utah is that he has eight wives, and in so far is much more moderate than his predecessor, who had seventeen and was the father of forty-eight living children, besides some twenty odd who died before him.

Speaking of the moral condition of the Mormon people Mr. Taylor remarked:

"I wish you had time to stay a little longer with us and see for yourself what sort of people our Church is composed of, and how our children are likely to grow up. A bad debt and a locked door are [were formerly] unknown among us. You will not meet a drunken or an idle man here, unless he be a Gentile. These men who want to reform us came here on the plea of improving our moral condition, and the first thing they did in that line was to introduce into Salt Lake drinking saloons, gambling houses, etc. Why," he said, after a pause, "all this talk against polygamy is nothing but abject hypocrisy. Show me a man among the Gentiles who is not actually a polygamist. The only difference is that with us it is open, a matter of faith, while with you it is clandestine. So blind is the outside world on this point that the other day a very intelligent person, discussing the question with me, brought forward as an argument that, since bigamy was punishable by the law of the country, polygamy should be still more so. It evidently seemed to him that the one was a triple or quadruple dose of the other. I had great difficulty in making him understand that bigamy was a breach of contract as well as a breach of the vow of monogamic union, while in polygamy there is neither breach of contract nor breach of any vow—nothing but following the teaching of Revelation."

Leaving the statements and arguments of Mr. Taylor to stand on their own merits, I must say here, that the testimony in favor of the business honesty of the Mormons is general, even among the most inimically disposed Gentiles. One of them said to me that he knew a large wagon-building firm which dealt almost exclusively with Mormons living in the distant settlements of Utah and Idaho. All of these buy wagons on time, and the roads being very hard here, the wagons usually wear out before the

time for the full payment comes around, yet the firm has never lost a cent in bad debts. The same person assured me that in his own business he infinitely preferred dealing with the Mormons to dealing with the Gentiles, but that this was not an easy policy to carry out, for the reason that the Mormons also preferred to deal with their own people.

Speaking of religious liberty, Mr. Taylor remarked that the leaders of the Mormon Church had always been more liberal with the Gentiles than the Gentiles had been with them.

"After all the persecutions we have been and still are subjected to," he said, "we have always offered hospitality to any other sect that comes here. The Gentiles who first came had no place of worship. We gave them the use of ours, besides giving them land and the material for building churches of their own. [This is an exaggeration. President Taylor merely said that Mormons had assisted in these matters.] We have here Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics—every denomination of Gentiles—and all of them have their churches and their schools, with which we never think of interfering, for we are in no way afraid of their competition. The other day two Jewish ladies came to me to ask for a plot of land on which to build a synagogue. I immediately selected the best piece of land I could find vacant, and went out myself with them to have a look at it; but for some reason or other they have not yet begun to build." [The location was not considered exactly suitable.]

Salt Lake City, by the by, is the only place on the face of the globe where the Jews are classed among the Gentiles. They are quite numerous here, and are engaged almost entirely in the clothing business. Their other favorite pursuits, banking and pawnbroking, do not thrive here. I have not seen a pawn shop in the whole city, while banking is almost entirely in the hands of the Mormons, and it is said to be carried on upon uncommonly solid principles. An equal degree of success has been attained by their co-operative stores. The largest of them in Salt Lake City occupies nearly a whole block, employs some 200 salesmen, and carries a stock of merchandise valued at more than a million dollars.

Business aptitude and a bent toward money making seem to be especially encouraged by Mormon doctrines. At all events there are no beggars or poor men to be seen here, while a considerable number of the representatives of Mormonism are reputed to be immensely wealthy. Brigham Young died a millionaire, and the lawsuits now pending in the United States Courts between the Trustees of the Church and some of his heirs is only a new proof of the skill with which the Latter-day Saints take care of their worldly interests. By an act of Congress, passed in 1862, it was enacted that no church in any of the Territories should hold property exceeding the amount of \$50,000. Mr. Taylor believes that the law was passed for the special purpose of restricting the financial future of the Mormon Church. In consequence of this law, most of the property of the Mormon Church was passed over as a special trust to Brigham Young. In the course of time Church property thus got mixed up with Young's personal property, and hence a lawsuit between his heirs and the trustees of the Church, a lawsuit which, Mr. Taylor avers, would have been settled long ago, if a number of Gentile lawyers had not taken hold of it.

"Is it true," I inquired, "that toward the end of his life Brigham Young became so exacting and avaricious that he lost a great deal of his popularity among the Mormon people?"

"There is not a word of truth in it," was the President's reply. "The beginning of Brigham Young's fortune dates from the time of the construction of the Union and Central Pacific roads. He made a contract for the building of a portion of the overland line, and by using the labor of our people built the road much cheaper than anybody else could ever have done. He built, also, many of our own roads in Utah. This was the basis of his personal fortune, and you know that the only difficult thing is to make the first \$100,000; all the others make themselves."

RIGOLI.