

MONOGAMY AND POLYGAMY.

The following communication, containing some considerable amount of sound sense, which appeared in a recent number of the *Commonwealth*, Denver city, C. T., was written, not for publication in that Territory, as the author informs the public, but to be sent to a friend in Washington city. By some mistake on the part of an individual intrusted with its transmission, it was left in the office of the *Commonwealth*. The editor, supposing that it was intended for that journal, published it, much to the surprise of the writer, who was not well pleased with its appearance; not because he was unwilling to "face the music" and defend the statements therein made, but because it was hurriedly and carelessly written, and not intended for the benefit of the people of Colorado, to whom it was inapplicable. As will be seen from its perusal, the writer is tolerably well versed in history—biblical especially—fully as much so as the Executive of Utah, whom he gives a few home-thrusts, which may be deemed personal, as they imply the absence of knowledge as well as verity. The appearance of the article in the *News* will not, of course, be considered a full indorsement of all the sentiments therein expressed. They are, however, in the main, very correct, but the diction is somewhat objectionable in a few instances:

UTAH—WHAT SHALL BE DONE WITH IT?

This is a question for statesmen. Have we got any statesmen? If we have, why have they not prevented the present evils? Why do men in high places go on complicating and multiplying evils? Is it not enough that we have a war about the negro, and are threatened with a foreign war, that we must have a further complication by hasty and ill-advised legislation about an obscure Territory, located in the heart of a desolate range of mountains? These are pertinent questions brought out in part, by the reading of the message of Governor Harding, as published by authority. Not only are these questions evolved, but I shall presume to offer an opinion on this particular bone of contention. Before saying my say, it is necessary for my own vindication, against the blindness and bigotry of the world, to assert that the writer is innocent of any sympathy with polygamy—that he believes in the dual relation—that the duties and obligations of the family circle are teachings of nature, and absolute necessities, which cannot be omitted without the grossest wrongs to the innocent and helpless.

I shall not argue the respective merits of the antagonistic social system; with these I have nothing to do; we have no right to contemplate them, except in the light of their political relations, rights, influences, etc.

It is very plain that the great barrier to the admission of Utah is the plurality of wives. This the Governor declares he will not discuss Biblically, and yet he concedes the toleration of the practice by the Old Testament, but that under the New, it must cease; and then falsifies the facts of history by stating "that it prevailed to a limited extent," when he knew, and every well-read man knows that it was and continues to be the universal custom of all eastern nations outside the pale of modern Christianity. The Governor then asserts, as a fundamental proposition: "That no community can happily exist with an institution so important as marriage, wanting in all those qualities that make it homogeneous with institutions and laws of neighboring civilized communities, having the same object." The subsequent rational processes of the Governor should teach him and all others that the less we meddle with that peculiar arrangement by law or force, and the more we leave it to that inevitable law and destiny which awaits special and universal conditions and relations antagonistic to overwhelming majorities, the sooner we shall be rid of their discords.

But Congress was out of employment, and must needs stir up more strife, and hence a law to test the legality and constitutionality of the social system of an obscure mountain bound territory. Next in the programme is the omission of action on their application solely for the purpose of testing their unconstitutional legislation on the subject of marriage. After the passage of an enabling act, and the formation of a constitution in accordance therewith, and sending their delegate to Washington the omission of action was not only a slight, but an outrageous insult, the object of which is too apparent to be mistaken, and all the sophistry of Gov. Harding cannot conceal it. His recommendation of census taking was adding insult to injury.

That Congress has any abstract constitutional right to legislate on the subject of matrimony, I most emphatically deny. It can only be attempted on a far-fetched and implied inference, and that inference is not as clear as the right to legislate on the admission of slave states. Our fathers never contemplated equality in political power between North and South—they never expected to hear a new slave state knocking at the door for admission; they supposed the abolition of the trade would cut off the supply and slavery would die out, and hence new states might be added, provided their form was republican. But new territory and new slave states have

been added. The prevailing custom was the dual system in social life, and the modern interpretation of the New Testament, the rule of society on that subject; hence, the presumption that there would be no digression, and hence the omission of any constitutional provision pro or con. Again, it should be remembered that the universal practice has been to leave to the states the enactment of penal laws for the violation of the dual system. This is a novel case, and should be handled discreetly. If the Territorial Legislature of Utah has failed to enact their plurality in form, the constitution fails to condemn or forbid it, and the question is not only open but it is complex.

It must also be conceded, that, though marriage with us is a civil act, which the magistrate binds and releases, it is also a religious act, instituted according to the popular faith in the Garden of Paradise for man's especial benefit; "And God saw that it was not good for man to be alone." It is therefore plain that our practice as well as the legal sanction of our statutes are the results of our popular theology. In proof of this, I only cite to the fact, that thousands of our people refuse to be married by the civil magistrate, especially if he belongs not to the household of faith. Originally, in its sources, the marriage system was wholly divine, and has been made civil by modern innovation. They, the Mormons, adopt the ancient idea—make it exclusively religious, bind their consciences on earth and determine their destiny—particularly the destiny of the wayward, hesitating and resisting sisters who refuse to be sealed and aid in their divine mission and duty of "multiplying and replenishing," in eternity. They claim the Bible and so do we. They claim Jo Smith as an inspired Teacher, while a very large part of our civilization claim that God calls and sets men apart specially to the work of the ministry—expounding the word and saving souls. To the reasoning mind the difference is not great.

Additionally to all this, they confirm their doctrines by miracles; they claim with much show of consistency the ancient gifts; they have prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, and what is more palpable, the healing of the sick by laying on of hands, while we ignore all such evidences and confine them to the early and dark ages of christianity.

Now then, seeing that both systems are born of religious element in man—that all nations, not accepting modern Christianity, and not claiming divinity for their sanction, not only adopt that which is most convenient, but the very opposite of our practice, would it not be well to pause and consider who has the best authority—who has the clearest sanction of the common authority? For this very purpose I now write. I would like to see justice done. I would like to see statesmen pause and tremble before they force on us and the world another war involving not a merely moral or political antagonism, but a fight which essentially involves a religious controversy; for, after all, the popular prejudices in the States, on this subject, are the products of their theology.

Now, then, I affirm that the Mormons have the advantage of us.

1st. It was universally practiced in the early ages of the world, (I mean historically).

2d. It was taught, permitted and practiced by the Jews in its most odious form—wives and concubines—as the special and chosen people of God.

3d. The Old Testament in no case condemns it.

4th. Polygamy was the common practice at the time of Christ's advent, and subsequently during the apostolical period.

5th. The New Testament nowhere presents an emphatic denunciation of the practice. It simply contents itself with general descriptions of the relation—defines their duties, and requires the Bishops and Elders to be the husband of one wife, thus permitting by a fair legitimate inference the laity to adopt the common practice without offence, just as the M. E. Church tolerated the buying and selling of men, women and children by the laity, and denied that privilege to the Bishops.

I do not propose to argue this series of assertions; all but the last are known to school-boys, and the last would be known if common sense and reason prevailed instead of ignorance, superstition, bigotry and general intolerance of difference of opinion. Modern civilization has adopted the dual system, and theologians construe the New Testament to harmonize with their views. I unhesitatingly affirm that no man can put a legitimate construction upon the New Testament and clearly condemn the followers of Joe Smith.

It is proper to call public attention to another fact. We are compelled to tolerate the polygamy of all the Indian tribes nearly in the country. Are not the wisecracks alarmed at this innovation—this incongruity—this barbarism? And yet there would be about as much reason in a crusade against the Sioux, the Arapahoes, etc., as against the poor, deluded Mormons.

With all their faults they have their uses. They have peopled the desert; they have made the wilderness to blossom as the rose; they have sustained life in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains in the face of perpetual snows. Like our pilgrim fathers, they fled from civil and religious intolerance. From Ohio they fled to Missouri; thence to Illinois; thence to Salt Lake. They have energy, zeal, faith. They are a brave people—they are a feeble people. It is an impossibility that they can harm us. It is to us a matter of no con-

sequence whether they are admitted as a State or not.

So long as they do not invade us; so long as they leave undisturbed our great lines of travel, we should at least permit them to enjoy unmolested their peculiar views; and let those uniting their destiny with them endure the consequences of their indiscretion. I say let them alone. If you want to increase their faith and zeal, and make converts, persecute them—make martyrs of a few. Bring them to the faggot and stake. Let a few of them die amid the flames, testifying, as they would, their unshaken faith, and you will only increase their numbers. If the boasted civilization of the 19th century and 30,000,000 of people is not sufficient to tolerate and quietly eradicate this social heresy, without violence, then this heresy ought to survive and its opposition ought to perish.

This great nation should remember that though the Mormons have erroneous ideas and bad practices, their persecutions have been of the nature of mob violence, and in many cases unjustly severe and brutal; the innocent have suffered with the guilty. That they should feel soured is but natural—that they should retaliate in the same spirit, and with the same reckless disregard of innocence or guilt, is also natural. This is a part of their religion, and the sword may compel obedience, but it seldom wins affection. Lenity, conciliation, toleration—mild measures should be used. Deny them admission if you like, but practice no fraud—no deception; tell them squarely what you mean, and in the end you may succeed; but any attempt to legislate away a man's faith in his prophet or God, is folly—is madness.

I have thus written because evil counsels prevail. I have no sympathy with Mormon ideas or customs; but I deprecate the waste of treasure and blood when no good can come of the waste.

JOHN B. WOLFF.

A BOLD ATTEMPT AT KIDNAPPING.

On Monday morning last a most dastardly, villainous and high-handed attempt to kidnap a young woman was perpetrated at Bountiful, about ten miles north of this city, by a bandit of soldiers from Camp Douglas.

The facts, as we have learned them from sources of unquestioned reliability, are as follows:

A woman named McMullen, who, with her two daughters and husband, a stepfather to the girls, arrived in this city last fall, sometime since, with her husband chose to take up quarters with the troops on the bench—military camp life being, no doubt, more in accordance with their feelings and inclinations than the less ostentatious, peace-promoting routine of civil life in Great Salt Lake City. Her two daughters, children by another and former husband, not especially relishing the high-flavored ingredients of life among soldiery, preferred to remain among their friends in this city. The older girl, named Agnes Lowry, was about twenty years of age, the younger one about fifteen.

Some time after becoming acclimated to the surroundings of Camp Douglas, the woman, having procured a carriage and horses for the purpose—which was doubtless effected without much trouble or expense—and, proceeding to the house of Mr. John Pack, in the 17th Ward, induced the unwitting younger girl to accompany her to the sidewalk, near where the carriage was in waiting, when by forcible seizure, in a clandestine manner, she was placed within the carriage and conveyed to camp, where, we are informed, she has since remained—whether her noles or volens has not been made to appear.

Having had such signal success in her nefarious operation in the instance above referred to, this woman-stealer, if not in the dark concaves of midnight orgies and abandon revelry, at least in the dark abyss of her own depravity, concocted the damning plot which now, even as we write, in the highest degree excites our detestation and indignation and utter abhorrence of the vile creature whose baseness and moral prostration could lead her to attempt the perpetration of a crime most horribly outrageous and devilish. Nor do we less abhor the miserable wretches who became her willing accomplices in the deed.

There being another victim deemed available for sacrifice at the shrine of bestiality, (or shall we rather use the term Christianity? for far be it from us to charge the brute creation with practices well known to be not only winked at, but approved under the fiat of vaunted Christian civilization) the splendid carriage and equipage—the same used so successfully before, it may be premised—was again at her service. In this foray she was attended by a gang of eight or ten mounted ruffians, partially disguised in citizens' dress, all armed with revolvers, who closely followed the vehicle, drove by another ruffian, convey-

ing the monster mother and the daughter first abducted, who had now herself, through the wily artifices of her inhuman mother, been trained to become a procuress also.

Arrived at the residence of Mr. Ward Pack, in Bountiful, where Miss Agnes had been living for some time, this feminine demon succeeded in obtaining an interview with her daughter at the gate. The carriage and kidnapping posse, being at a little distance and hidden by an intervening house, Mr. Pack had not noticed them. They were in full view, however, to Mr. George D. Grant, living just opposite, who, suspecting some treacherous proceeding was on foot, went immediately to Mr. Pack and informed him of the characters who were in waiting near his house. Seeing that a premature discovery was likely to take place, the old hag seized fast hold of the daughter and called loudly and vehemently for immediate aid; upon which her accomplices, with the carriage, moved promptly to the gateway. The soldiers, hastily dismounted, drew their revolvers and cocked them, preparatory for death-dealing work. Mr. Grant, however, had succeeded in releasing the young woman from the grasp of her unnatural mother before the troops could interpose.

The scene that ensued is said to have been highly illustrative of Christian refinement and civilization. Epithets and anathemas were freely belched forth, and the "Mormon" people in general were stigmatized as being everything in the world but quiet, decent and law-abiding. Cocked pistols were presented to the breast and head of Mr. Pack to enforce the demand for entrance into the house and for the surrender of the young woman; but he bravely and gallantly, against such odds, maintained his post to prevent entrance at the door, also displaying his revolver in proof of his ability to cope with them in "civilized" warfare if they chose to inaugurate it. This the villains did not, however, deem advisable, and well for them they were thus discretionate.

But a very short time elapsed ere the citizens had gathered in considerable numbers, and upon being made fully acquainted with the object of the rascals, could with difficulty be restrained from immolating the whole of them as an ensample to all future desecrators of the sanctity and peace of our homes and firesides. Wiser counsels, however, prevailed and, upon application, a writ was issued by Justice Call, upon which six of the offenders were arrested and taken to the house of Mr. Perigrine Sessions for safe keeping till yesterday morning, when they were brought to this city under a guard of eight men and thence conveyed to Camp Douglas, to be delivered over into the hands of the military authorities, that they may be dealt with as prescribed by recent act of Congress. As may have been already inferred from the statement above made as to the number arrested, it is proper here to state that before the arrests could be effected, some three of the gang, together with their infuriated and disconcerted leader and her younger daughter, made good their escape.

Upon their arrival here, as they halted a few moments to admit the completion of some legal preliminaries, it having been understood who they were, they became the objects of many searching glances—it being generally admitted that as a whole they were the most graceless, desperate and rascally-looking scamps that had disgraced our streets for many a day. No violence or insult, however, was even meditated—the most aggrieved by their criminal acts daring only that justice should take its course, the supremacy of law be vindicated and the people secured in the rights and privileges awarded them by constitutional and statutory guarantees.

Prosecuting Attorney Miner went up in advance to Camp Douglas and, upon the arrival of the prisoners, they were delivered over into the custody of the officer of the day, and were immediately placed in the guard-house.

That Gen. Conner, as military commandant of this district, or any of his subordinate officers, were in the remotest degree cognizant of the contemplated raid by some of his soldiers upon peaceable, law-abiding citizens, we do not believe. That, in his military surveillance in the premises, he will do all in his power to mete out deserved recompense to the offenders, we have no doubt—which, if done, we shall take unfeigned pleasure in announcing to the public without unnecessary delay.