

plural marriage and have abandoned their well-known hostility to such Federal laws as are in conflict with what they claim to be religious belief, let us look at the character of the Mormon people and their leaders.

The early Mormons were mainly native Americans and religious enthusiasts. Under a vigorous system of proselyting by missionaries, they have been largely recruited from all parts of the world. Either by chance or from policy their missionaries have mostly been to the parts of the country where the average rate of intelligence is the lowest, and they have made many converts from people of American birth, or from those of foreign birth who had first settled elsewhere in the United States. For a long time the bulk of their converts have come from the lower classes of England and Scandinavian countries, and they are yearly brought over by ship loads. Their missionaries say nothing of plural marriage and some converts hear of it for the first time when they reach Utah. They are picked up by a process of natural selection; the doctrine as expounded by the missionary fits the mental condition of the convert. He is told of the new and wondrous revelation, the intercourse with and guidance of spirits and angels, the power to work miracles, heal the sick and cure the deformed. That God has not only taken this chosen people under his care, but has given them a fine country where everyone can have fertile land, the association of a Brotherhood of Equals, and separation from the wickedness and oppression of the world. The doctrine thus put forth by shrewd leaders is accepted by the illogical, and those who give credence to the marvelous, to miracles, the portents of dreams and those in whom the imagination is not controlled by strict methods of reasoning.

The hope of a better worldly condition and the offer of aid to reach it are not without effect. They are not without intelligence sufficient to utilize their general experience in practical affairs; they are industrious in a slow, plodding way, frugal and easily governed. A firm religious enthusiasm is their leading characteristic. As a rule, they are law-abiding, especially as far as the law is confirmed by the Priesthood, but they accept the doctrine of plural marriage in all sincerity and as a radical and necessary part of their religion, and any civil law punishing polygamy and kindred offenses as crimes is considered wrong.

They have accepted the doctrine of polygamy and will probably adhere to it as long as they live, and it is but a very poor tribute to their honesty to say they have abandoned it. The women are as devotional as the men, probably more so. An intelligent woman probably expressed the sentiment of her sex in regard to polygamy by saying: "It is a cross, but I suppose it is true, and we must bear it."

#### MORMON SINCERITY.

While the Mormon masses are too sincere to voluntarily make false pretenses, they could be induced to accept and adopt any form of words however contradictory, if advised to do so by their authorities, for obedi-

ence to the Priesthood and to obey counsel is diligently inculcated as a first duty, and should they be told to sign a declaration that they were Mohammedans, that the Priesthood understood the matter and it was for the advancement of the cause and the glory of God, they would probably do it.

In other communities every man feels a consciousness of personal equality and independence and personal responsibility, and a strong love of country as against everything else. In Utah, among the Mormons, this is not the case. That instinctive love of country which is the distinguishing characteristic of the American people, does not find a responsive sentiment in Utah. The orthodox Mormon, in every political and business act, puts the Church first, the country afterward. It cannot be otherwise, for the priesthood claim all government but its own to be illegal, and claim a "separate political destiny and ultimate temporal dominion and by divine right."

Of political and official Mormonism I can only say it is probably sincere. There is insincerity, but it is not the rule. It is illogical to suppose such a body can be substantially held together on any theory of combination to support what they consider a mere imposture. It may as well be understood that the strength of Mormonism, both in its masses and officials, is in its sincerity and not in its imposture. In official Mormonism there may be some insincerity, but not enough to affect the question, and it may use its position for selfish ends; but this can be done by force of the position, and as well if it be sincere as if it be insincere, for human nature is not changed by the kind of church it enters.

A fair degree of sincerity is the only virtue I can ascribe to political and official Mormonism. When it has any point to attain in behalf of Mormonism it deals in evasions, or words of double meaning, meaningless words, hypocritical pretenses, false assertions and every helpful evasion of word or act. Its attitude in regard to the status of the Mormon people in regard to polygamy is delusive to the last degree. It knows there is no material change of opinion on the subject; but it seeks to convey the idea that there has been. It will not come out with a clear expression on the subject; but seeks and uses evasive expressions, intended to convey the idea abroad that the declaration has been made, and it is irritated when something express and definite is asked. The position it assumes is this, we have numbers and wealth sufficient to be released from Federal control; there formerly was opposition in the Territory to the law against polygamy, but see the present loyal attitude of our people. They have taken the registration oath, have put in their proposed Constitution a condemnation of polygamy as a crime. What more can you ask? If the express question is put, do you and your people still believe that polygamy is right and the doctrine one of divine origin? the answer is evasive: it will at once be said, you should not inquire into our religious views; those are mere opinions, and so long as we swear loyalty

to the laws and offer you this Constitution, and thus fulfill all proper political conditions, you have no right to intermingle church and state and ask our religious views, or suspect the bad faith of what we have sworn. When other Territories have applied for admission, and given you the evidence that they have fulfilled all political conditions, you did not enter upon an unconstitutional inquiry concerning the religious belief of its inhabitants, and how can you in our case? We demand Statehood as a right always accorded when political conditions are fulfilled.

This sophism, accompanied by suggestions of oppression, unjust prosecutions, agitation against them for the sake of plunder, and that there is no Utah question because polygamous marriages have ceased, entangles many who can only give the question a passing thought, and they are apt to think there are really two sides to the question.

No Territory has ever applied for Statehood or release from any measure of federal control with the great body of its people devoted to social crimes, and firmly believing such crimes are either commanded or permitted by revelation; and no Christian church has ever taught any such doctrine, so that Congress has never had occasion to enter upon any such inquiry.

#### LOCAL POLITICS.

In regard to the political affairs of Utah, one side claims the inquiry as to the loyalty of the people to the laws of their country is a proper political inquiry. The other side claims that this is bringing in a religious discussion and you have no business with a religious belief. There is such a wide difference in the use of terms that a harmonious conclusion is impossible.

One example will illustrate the distinction, and show the agitation of the question is not, as asserted, the work of jealous priests or rapacious laymen. The Josephite Mormons are understood to accept all the doctrines of Mormonism, except the revelation concerning polygamy, which they have claimed is a forgery, and they have intermingled with other religious denominations in the States and Territories, undisturbed, and enjoying all the immunities and privileges of law-abiding citizens. They have not withdrawn by themselves, organized crime, sanctified it to the people by revelation and called it religion; hence there is no political discussion concerning their belief.

(At one time it was thought the Josephite doctrine might be an important factor in Utah, but its influence has been crippled by the later proof, that at Nauvoo in the life time of Joseph Smith, polygamy was practiced by the leaders, and that men could and did marry two women by one ceremony, until the proof was made; and perhaps it was permitted to come out to meet the growing influence of the Josephites and their assertion that the revelation was a forgery concocted in Utah; the Mormons had persistently denied they were guilty of any violation of law, and were driven out without excuse, at the instigation of priests and for plunder,