

# DEFENCE OF MORMONISM,

IN A LETTER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HURKARU;

BEING A REFUTATION OF THE SLANDEROUS ACCUSATIONS WHICH APPEARED IN  
THE ABOVE NEWSPAPER UNDER THE ANONYMOUS SIGNATURE

OF

A VISITOR OF NAUVOO,

*Grounded on a review by the Editor of a Novel*

“ FEMALE LIFE AMONG THE MORMONS.”

BY

**ROBERT SKELTON AND J. P. MEIK,**

Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ,

OF

*Latter-day Saints.*

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**The Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day Saints**

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## PREFACE.

The following letter was sent to the Editor of the *Bengal Hurkaru* to meet the accusations advanced by an anonymous writer styling himself "a Visitor of Nauvoo" in letters published in that Paper on the 26th of October, and on the 1st and 3rd of November 1855, but from the length of the communication which the subject demanded, it could not be conveniently inserted in the *Hurkaru*, and was returned to us on that plea, which has led to its appearance in this form. The evidences referred to in the body of the letter have been added, as also the article on Polygamy by Milton.

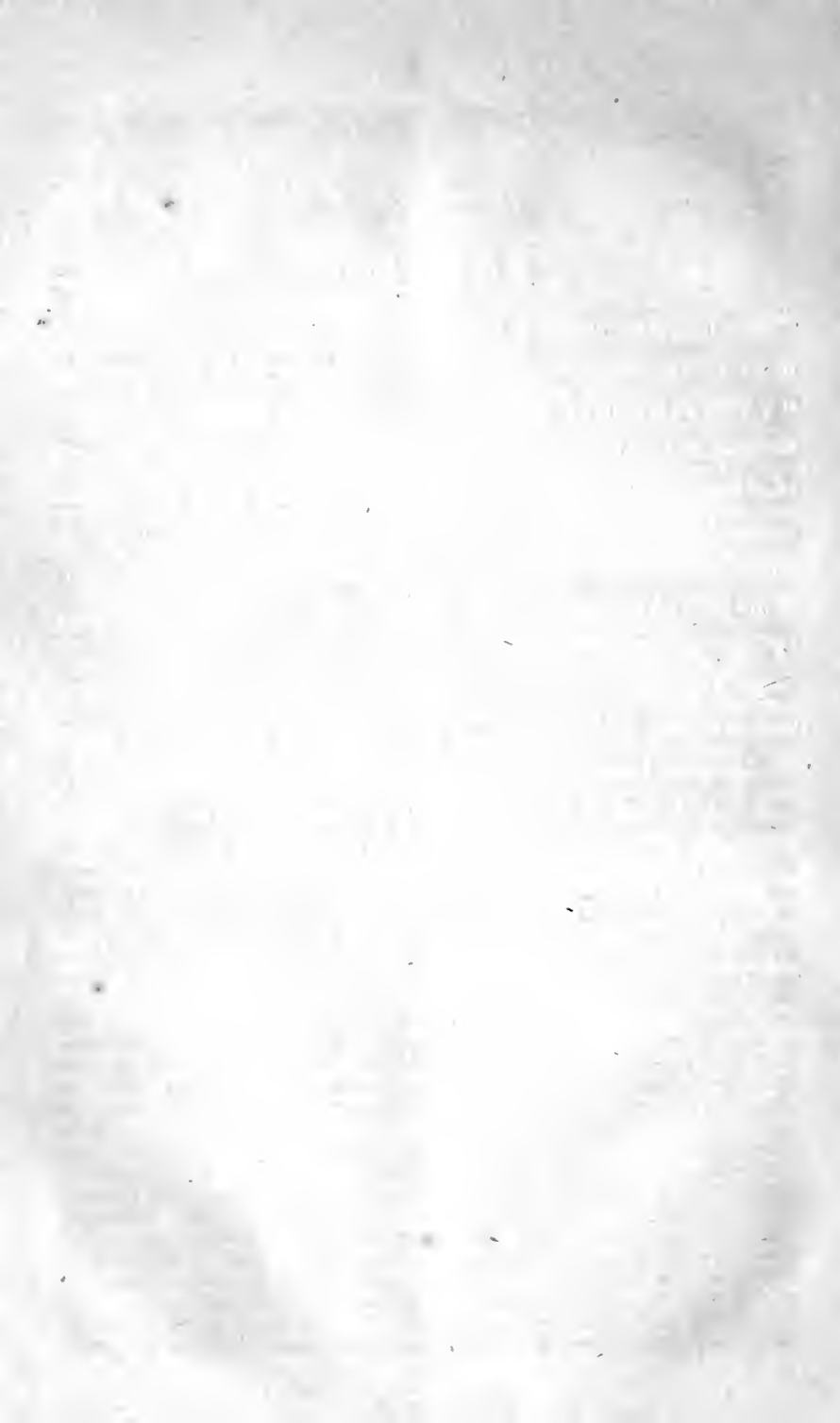
All who wish to procure the Standard works of the Mormons, will do well to apply to the Agents of the Latter Day Saints, Book depôt, 36, Islington, Liverpool; or at No. 35, Jewin Street, London.

A small variety of Books containing the doctrines of the Latter Day Saints, can be had at No. 20, Curreembux Khansamah's Lane, Wellesley Street, in this City.

The delays which have occasioned the late appearance of this pamphlet, have been unavoidable.

R. SKELTON,

J. P. MEIK,



Calcutta, December, 1855.

To

## THE EDITOR OF THE BENGAL HURKARU.

SIR,—A slanderous misrepresentation of the character and doctrines of Joseph Smith and his followers, grounded upon the remarks in the review of the Novel "Female life amongst the Mormons," which lately occupied a portion of your valuable column, leads us to trouble you with a few lines on the subject.

Inasmuch as the writer of the anonymous communications who styles himself "a visitor of Nauvoo"—has not scrupled to impeach the character of an abused but innocent, yes! innocent and amiable people; we feel it an imperative duty as lovers of truth and justice, and having a perfect knowledge of the same, to defend the doctrines held by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints; which we trust we may do on just and correct principles, and that you will allow our defence a place in your columns, for which we shall feel greatly obliged.

As the "visitor of Nauvoo" himself condemns the fiction professing to be the auto-biography of a female while with the Mormons, and points to discrepancies to prove that it could not be the result of personal experience but was a forged narrative written by an Englishman; we need not dwell on the contents of that abominable work further than to express, from the intimate and personal knowledge we have more or less had of the people, our condemnation of it as a worthless and lying production; not founded even on facts as the "visitor" would have it; but altogether false; being a base and malicious tissue of untruths purporting to describe the acts and practices of the Mormon leaders and people, with the evident view to injure, and if possible extinguish them as a community not worthy to live upon the face of the earth.

We acknowledge that similar reports were generally current in the United States when the Mormons were comparatively unknown and their character and motives misunderstood; but with the better classes, including the Presi-

dent of the States and many of the officers of Government, these reports have in a measure been exploded as erroneous impressions; proofs of which we are ready to give in testimonials from official and other gentlemen who have been, and yet are, residents in Utah

We have stated that the whole narrative of "Female life amongst the Mormons" is an evident fabrication—as such it is altogether destitute of dates; and even the names of the localities and scenes pictured in it are not given, rendering it a very jumble and maze that cannot be traced by any searcher of truth. The only individuals known in the Church whose names are mentioned are Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and an Elder Pratt who is made to say a few words; but no one could recognize any of these by the descriptions given evidently by one who had never seen them; and the other characters are altogether fabulous, as are all the statements made in it. We will only mention one with its bearings. In their Exodus, Mrs. Ward after journeying some time with them in the wilderness, describes the beaten roads and encampments as strewed with the bones of the former emigrants that had passed through the country to California! Now it is a known fact that the Mormons were the first pioneers in that direction; had to make their own roads where no body of Americans had previously travelled; and that it was not till the next season that the gold-seekers followed in their tracks, the Californian gold having been first discovered by some of the Mormon battalion on their return from service in Mexico. Of the formation of this battalion—one of the most important incidents in their Exodus—which consisted chiefly of the heads of families and materially thinned and weakened their camp, Mrs. Ward does not mention a word, but passes it over in silence; because, not having been there, she knew nothing of it, while the ex-

traordinary circumstances connected with it are noted and commented on by Colonel Thos. L. Kane, who though not a Mormon, journeyed with them, sympathised with their undeserved expulsion and persecutions, and appreciated and admired the spirit with which they bore their deep afflictions and sore and fiery trials. Indeed such a perfect ignorance is shown in the work of palpable facts and of the leading incidents and features of the fortunes of the Mormon body, that it would be simply ridiculous to any one having the slightest knowledge of the same, were it not for the utter and bare-faced imposition and presumption of the production, and the slanderous, malicious, and evil intent of the producer, which must grieve any one who knows ought of the Mormons, those excepted who "love not the truth but a lie:" but notwithstanding all this we do not anticipate much harm from it, for it renders us as a people too black for reasonable belief and its alleged facts are altogether too gross and overdone, and far too improbable to have weight with or impose on any but the most ignorant or those unacquainted with even the name of Mormonism; and consequently cannot, as intended, injure the cause but the contrary; for should light or any particle of truth afterwards break in upon the minds of those who have formed their estimate of the Mormon character, faith, and practices from this untruthful work, the reaction will be the stronger; and they will be ashamed of having credited so flagrant a production: and may-hap, be led to inquire further into the true state and bearings of our much vilified church. We have thus alluded to and touched this revolting work with the unqualified disgust of those forced to handle unclean things, and gladly drop it, in faith consigning it to the pit from whence it emanated.

Being evil spoken of, Mr. Editor, by all men (with few exceptions) is no proof of guilt, or of the condemnation of heaven; but is, and must be, a portion of the cross to be taken up by Christ's true Church, wherever, and whenever it exists upon the earth, until the consummation of all things takes place. It was so in our Lord's day in regard to Himself; who, though he

walked about openly, and mixed with the people, bore the character of a winebibber, or drunkard, an associate of publicans and harlots; a blasphemers of God, and deceiver of the people; who had a devil, to whom His works were attributed, and who was cried down as a seducer and an abomination by the pious, the respectable, and the learned of the age; and by their influence was finally as a malefactor put to death! and His disciples also, whatever might have been their previous characters and standing, as soon as they became followers of the crucified one, were looked upon as the scum and offscouring of all things by the wise, the noble, the honourable, and the religious of their times.

It may be very well for us to believe otherwise regarding Christ and His disciples *now*; and as the Pharisees said of the ancient Prophets, to say, "if we had lived in the days of the Son of God we would not have persecuted Him and His followers, but have received the truths they taught, and honoured them as we now do their memories;" but we suspect we little think *how* we have attained to this belief—how it has come to us through the teaching and traditions of our fathers, derived from the *testimony of these same once traduced Apostles and disciples*, whose works have outlived the vilifications, malicious representations, and lying descriptions of their enemies, and *not from those enemies themselves*, who have long since passed away and gone to their account.

Thus professing Christendom believes in the Revelations of the New Testament from the testimony of the followers and disciples of the Lord Jesus; but we cannot give more credit to them in the writings of the New Testament, than the Jews gave to the writings of Moses and others in the old. They received and revered the old communications made by God to the ancient prophets, and obeyed them to the best of their knowledge and ability, so that Christ could say of the scribes and Pharisees. "If I had not come among you, ye would not have had sin;" but when new light was offered and *revelations were made to them in their own day* the result was to bring out and ex-

pose the latent unbelief and hatred of heavenly things lurking in their minds under the professed faith and sanctity which *alone* were visible to men; so that when they came to be tried as their forefathers with direct communications from heaven, they proved themselves no better than them, and persecuted the truth even unto death; in so much that Jesus could say of them that they were whited sepulchres, fair indeed outwardly, but foul and full of dead men's bones within.

Now all this is strictly applicable to this day, although we cannot enlarge on it here.

It is easy to sail with the tide; and fall in with a religion and faith derived from teachings of men, which, founded on tradition, and confined to ancient inspiration, denies immediate revelation and disallows living oracles—Such a religion affects not man's independence; allows the mind to rest on a bare belief, or in a form of godliness without the power; disturbs it not by contact with heavenly powers; and leaves it free from the authority of those commissioned from above, who proclaim the laws of God as revealed from day to day, to meet the circumstances of the generation they live in, and who require *complete and unhesitating compliance and submission thereto*. As man must believe and quiet his conscience with something; and as the former interferes little with his pleasures and pursuits, it suits him well; and we do not wonder at such being so popular, as to form broad ways, in which the multitude walk with little thought, but with ease and satisfaction to themselves, but when we touch upon the latter—it is a far different thing—a strait gate, a narrow way, that requires the child like spirit; the implicit obedience: the emptying of self; and the total consecration of all always on the altar, from those who believe the teachings of immediate revelation, and of commandments and precepts referring to daily occurrences, given with authority, not to be resisted; the authority of heaven. This last was the position the Lord Jesus would have brought the scribes and Pharisees to, but *they would not*. Independent, respected, self-sufficient, and wise in their own conceits; limited

and contracted in their faith, and embedded in the traditions of their forefathers; they rejected the light and interference of immediate revelation, and with it their Saviour! Thus it has been from the beginning, when God would speak to men; and thus we are told it will always be;—rejection by the multitude, reception by the very few—thus it was with the Pharisees, and thus it is with professing Christendom and its teachers in this day: who conceive like them, that they are serving God, and that they would have received and honoured former revelations, had the messengers lived in their time; but when tried as of old with messages and commandments direct from heaven, and the light of immediate revelation, what has been the result? they have been proved to be no better than their predecessors; and have treated Joseph Smith, and the other Prophets sent to declare God's mind in regard to them and the times they live in, with the same scorn and contumely; in like manner rejecting them utterly as immoral blasphemers of God, and deceivers of the people; speaking all evil falsely of them, as the Lord Himself predicted, who said, that a "prophet is not without honour except in his own house," or what is equally true, except in his own generation, and amongst the people he is sent to; and that such must expect no better treatment than their Lord, for "if they call the master Beelzebub, how much more they of His household."

All this we find exemplified in the Mormon Church, which *alone* professes, as the Churches of old, to be *founded on immediate revelation*, and is therefore like them calumniated, persecuted, and warred against by all destitute of the knowledge of the mind of God. But, in spite of all opposition, the truth spread in Apostolic days, and was the saving of many; so we, by revelation, first *given by prophecy when there were only six members in this Church*—have the *assurance*, that nothing will prevent its progress and high and noble destiny in these the last days, when the Church and Kingdom of the most High God have been re-established on earth for the last time, as foretold by the prophet Daniel, to overcome, and

increase, and endure till her Head and King comes for her full and complete salvation.

We therefore *fear not* to have the doctrines and practices of the Latter day Saints scrutinized; all we wish is, that, with all other things, according to the Apostle Paul's instructions, they may be investigated and proved; and it found *good*, embraced, and held fast. We challenge the inquiry, and fear not the results in honest hearted men.

As among the doctrines held by the Church of Jesus Christ of latter Days Saints, *Polygamy* is that most carped at and distorted, by the author of the Novel, as well as by "the visitor" and all who profess to be *too holy* to abide it; we will at present confine ourselves to a few remarks on its nature, as held by us, being quite different in its ends and use, from the gratification of the lusts alluded to by them. We acknowledge that it is a true doctrine; and is practised, not only by the expressed permission, but commendment of God. We will first however premise, that the whole subject is clearly and fully treated in a work published by Elder Orson Pratt, called the "*Seer*," which is available to the Public, who may wish for further information on the subject; as in the limited space that may be allotted to us in your column, we can only give a slight sketch, with a few Scripture references as proofs of its divine origin.

That we hold a plurality of wives to be one of the principles of the gospel of Christ, is verily true; but to have indiscriminate intercourse with the female sex, as accused—irrespective of the law of marriage, is as utterly false; which is known to all acquainted with our doctrines and practices; neither is adultery known amongst us as a people; because all who commit this crime, subject themselves to the *penalty of death*, as of old.

In the revelation given to Joseph Smith, God saw fit, with the restoration of other truths, to re-establish amongst His people Polygamy as practised by His approved friend and father of the faithful, Abraham; as well as by his descendants while they remained God's

chosen people; while He also, as straitly condemned fornication and adultery, as He did of old, when found amongst them.

If Polygamy is an abomination in the sight of God now, it was so then; if otherwise, who will pretend to have purer eyes than the Holy One of Israel and condemn it?

We will here quote from an article published in a periodical lately started in New York city U. S. A. by "John Taylor," one of the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church, who was in prison with Joseph Smith when he was martyred, and at the time received four balls in his body.

"We are not ashamed to proclaim to this great nation; to rulers and people; to the President, Senators, Legislators, and Judges; to high and low, rich and poor, priests and people; that we are firm and conscientious believers in polygamy; that it is part and parcel of our religious creed. We do this calmly, seriously, and understandingly, after due deliberation, careful examination, and close investigation of its principles and bearings, religiously, socially, morally, physically, and practically;—we unhesitatingly pronounce our full and implicit faith in this principle, as emanating from God; and that under his direction, it would be a blessing to the human family.

"We have not room to enter into the merits of this subject this issue but shall touch upon a few items which circumstances render necessary, and leave the details for another time.

"We are aware that strong prejudices exist in the minds of the good and virtuous, the honourable and high minded of our land, in relation to this subject; and we think we can respect and appreciate all such feelings, when honestly and candidly expressed. These are serious matters, pregnant with importance, and not to be trifled with. They enter into the domestic circle, and sinuate themselves into all the conditions and relationships of life; and therefore demand the most serious, calm, and dispassionate consideration. Society is already corrupt enough, God knows; and to seek to tear down the



"flimsy barriers that so feebly guard  
 "our weak and rickety standard of  
 "morality, would be a thing to be de-  
 "precated by every honourable man.  
 "These things are not with us a mat-  
 "ter of theory or speculation; nor a  
 "system of loathsome sensual gratifica-  
 "tion. We have higher aims, and  
 "more exalted views of the relation-  
 "ship of man and wife; and it pains  
 "us to see the fountain of life thus  
 "corrupted. We cannot without sym-  
 "pathy behold man who was created  
 "in the image of God to stand at the  
 "head of creation, become a poor, ef-  
 "fete, degraded being; and woman,  
 "chaste, beautiful and lovely, deceived,  
 "crushed, hartered, betrayed, sunk in  
 "crime, a creature of and for lust, or  
 "view the powers given of God to  
 "man for the propagation of his spe-  
 "cies, perverted to debauchery and  
 "lasciviousness, with all its revolting,  
 "deadly, corrupt and damning effects;  
 "without some regard for fallen humani-  
 "ty. Neither can we behold without  
 "emotion, that body, which christians  
 "expect to be the residence of their  
 "spirit in the resurrection of the just,  
 "which ought to be pure, chaste, vir-  
 "tuous and noble, become polluted and  
 "degraded; a receptacle of disease—  
 "the effects of transgression—unheal-  
 "thy, weak, emaciated, a living, loath-  
 "some crawling mass; and children,  
 "inheriting from their birth diseases  
 "entailed by their parents to the third  
 "and fourth generations. We as eter-  
 "nal beings believe in eternal laws,  
 "covenants and unions emanating from  
 "God and based upon purity and vir-  
 "tue; we are not united only "till death  
 "do us part," but expect an eternal uni-  
 "on in the eternal world, based upon  
 "living, intelligent, eternal, principles;  
 "our Gospel, our religion, our cove-  
 "nants and marriages; all our acts  
 "refer to this; and no one can detest  
 "the loathsome, degraded, corrupt and  
 "miserable state of the world, in rela-  
 "tion to lewdness, lasciviousness, adul-  
 "tery and debauchery more than we  
 "do; and were women treated with  
 "us, as they are in thousands of in-  
 "stances here, it would cost a man his  
 "head"—

The "visitor of Nauvoo" advances the  
 following propositions, viz., 1st, "No

one is *wild* enough to affirm that Poly-  
 gamy is any where commanded in the  
 Bible;" and "2nd, It is borne *with* in  
 the darkest times, but *always with a*  
*view to prohibition.* "In answer to  
 these, we will now proceed to produce  
 some scripture proofs that Polygamy  
 is of God," and was practised by his  
 people with *His permission and sanc-*  
*tion,* which the "Visitor" must either  
 acknowledge or deny his Bible; or "read  
 it in a less strange way" than he ac-  
 cuses the "Reader" of doing in his  
 attack upon the article in the "Engli-  
 shman." As one of the chief polygamists,  
 we will begin with Abraham, the father  
 of the faithful, and the *personal friend*  
*of God.* We find that in his old age,  
 having no children, and his wife Sarah,  
 on account of her barrenness seeing no  
 prospects of any through herself, to  
 meet the promises of an innumerable  
 progeny made by God to Abraham;  
 gave her handmaid Hagar to him, her  
 husband, that *she* might bear him seed.  
*She* made this sacrifice of her feelings at  
 the shrine of faith and duty, not at  
 the instigation of Abraham to pander  
 to his lusts but to bring to pass the  
*word of the Lord,* and that children  
 might be raised up to Abraham;  
 which step and consequent union was  
 approved and blessed of God; for  
 while Ishmael, the fruits of it, was  
 yet in Hagar's womb, the angel of  
 the Lord appeared to her, and said,  
 "I will multiply thy seed exceeding y,  
 that it cannot be numbered for multi-  
 tude" He also told her how to name  
 the child; and Hagar called the name  
 of the Lord who then spoke to her  
 "Thou God seest me" Can any thing  
 else be made of this, than that the om-  
 niscient God, the searcher of hearts,  
*sanctioned and blessed the act?* Again  
 when Ishmael was about fifteen years  
 old, and with Hagar was about to  
 perish in the wilderness, God "heard  
 the voice of the lad," and interposed,  
 and saved their lives; and said unto  
 Hagar, "*Fear not, arise lift up the*  
*lad, and hold him in thine hand*"—pre-  
 paratory to the covenant about to be  
 made—"for I will make of him a great  
 nation," and "God was the Lord, and he  
 grew." Does not this confirm the first  
 approval and blessing, and further prove  
 that God, from whom it emanated, had

not changed his opinion of the act. Abraham did *not* divorce his first wife Sarah, to marry Hagar, but *afterwards* had a child *also* by her; which child was blessed by God with far greater blessings than even Ishmael; as were also Abraham and Sarah themselves; and God said to Abraham concerning Sarah—after, and in approval of the sacrifice she had made of her husband to Hagar—“I will bless her, and give thee a son *also* of her, *yea* I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations.” Gen. xvii. 16.

Here God instead of condemning Abraham's previous intercourse with Hagar, and Sarah's connivance and assistance in it, *Himself refers to it* in saying, I will give thee a son *also* of Sarah; how? even as I gave thee of Hagar; the inference cannot be set aside or any doubts remain that the transaction was of God and was approved and sanctioned by Him.—God did not withdraw the light of His countenance from this holy family after these occurrences, but constantly revealed Himself to Abraham, who continued to walk with Him as His *Friend* and from whom He, (God,) concealed nothing, “and the Lord said, *shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do*, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him; *For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord* and do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which is spoken of him.” Gen. xviii. 17.

The apostle James says “if a man is an offender in one point,” in regard to God's known commandments, “he is an offender in all.” If therefore Polygamy was evil in the sight of the Lord, how could Abraham, who was then living and continued to live in the open commission thereof, obtain this great blessing? and if it was a crime, or otherwise than part and parcel of God's revealed will, how could he command his children after him and we know they were a nation of Polygamists—“to keep the way of the Lord? unless like some modern teachers he said, “Do as I say, but not as I do.” Abraham was not such

an hypocrite; but in the way of Polygamy as well as in other things, did right in the sight of God: for the Lord Jesus Himself stated, and all believers in the Bible confess, that *he kept the way of the Lord* to the end, and after death, was saved and exalted in the kingdom of God's glory. But more—his same Abraham, while walking with God, had afterwards other wives and concubines; and many children by them, who had grown up to man's estate before he died. Gen. xxv. 1 to 6! all which could not have taken place, except with the consent and approbation of the God he served; and whose commandments he obeyed. Now all the above facts, and inferences, are *indisputable*, and clearly prove, if they prove any thing, that *Polygamy* was viewed very differently by God and those directly instructed by him from what it is by modern Christians—that it was not considered a crime, but on the contrary had the *express sanction and approval of the Most High*, whose ways far exceed those of man; and who, if man does not, *ever distinguishes between good and evil*, and in *this respect changeth not*.

We will now proceed to Jacob, on whom the blessings of Abraham were confirmed; a careful perusal of whose history will show, that his marrying all his four wives was approved of God; whose blessing was upon him and his, while living in a state pronounced sinful, detestable, abominable and beastly in these refined days; let us look into it. Rachel, one of his wives, when she herself bare not, gave Bilhah her handmaid to Jacob; and said, when Bilhah bore him a son, “God hath judged me;” does this mean pronounced judgment on me, and condemned me? No! but has approved of my act, and rewarded me; and “hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son; and she called his name Dan”—again, God hearkened unto another of Jacob's wives, and she conceived, and bare Jacob a fifth son and Leah said, “*God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband;*” how indubitably, and expressly these show God's approval of the acts referred to!

Of Jacob's wives it is said, “These did build the house of Israel;”

—and their immediate progeny gave names to the twelve tribes of Israel, to last for ever; for they are written on the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem; the *final* goal and habitation we all hope to reach. Jacob's course being approved of God, He protected him and his from his enemies, and cautioned Laban not to hurt him; and He himself met him, and blessed, and conferred on him a new name, as He had formerly done on Abraham and Sarah; and, confirming the promises and blessings of Abraham upon him, commanded him, as he had done them, to be fruitful and multiply. All these were blessed as workers of righteousness, and keepers of the *ways and commandments* of the Lord; and if so, polygamy must have been amongst *these commandments*, and have been looked upon by God as righteous; else they could not have been so commended; nor could they who had lived the greater part of their lives, and died polygamists, if that state was wrong—have been taken to heaven without repentance: we know they did not repent on earth, and they could not afterwards; for, according to the belief of Christendom, in the *grave there is no repentance*. The conclusion is, either that these holy God-fearing patriarchs, if polygamy is wrong, are in hell, or that, as polygamists, they did right, and were blessed for it!

Referring to Moses, we find among the laws given by him, that, “should a man die childless, and leave a widow, his brother was bound,” whether married or not, “to take her to wife, and raise up seed to his brother.” This was not a new rule, but merely the confirmation of an observance that had formerly been practised, and as polygamy had long been a Jewish institution, God's people were enabled to keep the above law, without breaking another; for, had it been otherwise, and they been monogamists, Moses would not have given it; nor ordered, that “if a man took another wife to himself, his attention and duties to his first one should not thereby be diminished.” By another law, a *Bastard* was not to enter God's house to the tenth generation; and we see, from sacred history, that the prohibition did not include the fruits of polygamy;

who were all legalized, as well as the children of concubines; for instance, Gideon, Samuel, Solomon, and many others, whom the Lord visited and blessed, and made priests and rulers in His House and Kingdom. That a concubine was something vastly different from the kept mistresses of Christendom; and that they were held as *sacred to a man as a wife*; and that another having connexion with them was considered as much adultery as if they had been called *wives*, is evident from the word; a remarkable instance of which, we have in the history of the Levite and his concubine, in the book of Judges; whose *humiliation*, by some of the wicked of the people led to almost the total extermination of the tribe of Benjamin, who seemingly approved, and took up arms to defend their brethren, the perpetrators of the act; thus awfully punished by the Almighty.

*God Himself* gave the wives of Saul into the bosom of David, and told him, through His prophet Nathan, that he *would have given him many more had he required it and asked Him*; but seeing that instead of doing so, led by his own passions, he had unauthorizedly taken another man's wife—Bath-heba—and thereby committed adultery, and the murder it led to; He (God) would *take away all the wives he had, and give them to a neighbour better than he!* Did God give David wives as a snare, and curse, and mark of His displeasure? or take them away from him, because He was pleased with his conduct? No! surely No! He acted quite otherwise; but how? Is God a minister of sin? according to modern ideas He was in acting so contrary to the superior and refined purity of His creatures now *adays*.

We think we have now sufficiently proved that nothing can be clearer from God's dealings with His people, as recorded in the Old Testament, than His approval of a plurality of wives, when obtained according to His will, and held in righteousness.

The fact is so perspicuous and incontrovertible, that there is no use of multiplying and adducing further passages to prove the purity, and righteousness of the practice in the sight of the Most High.

We will now notice what has been advanced by the Visitor of Nauvoo and other objectors, that all these worthies enumerated, "lived in an inferior dispensation; and were in ignorance and darkness, compared with the superior light Christians now enjoy; and that therefore God winked at these things; and allowed them, because of the hardness of their hearts; the infancy of the human mind; and the rude and childish state they were in; but that such practices have since been condemned; and are done away with in the New Testament; not being suited to our present stage of growth in enlightened Christendom!"

This argument, specious as it is, will not bear scrutiny, nor can it stand.

Has the "Visitor of Nauvoo" seen God? or have any favoured ones of the party he belongs to, or any other sect, had direct communications from Him, as those worthies had? if not, is not their boast of light and knowledge vain? How otherwise do they know God's will in relation to this or any other of His ordinances? from the New Testament? where is its interpreter? for from the various readings, explanations and opinions that have split Christendom into innumerable parties, separating from and accusing one another of schisms, heresies, ignorance of the truth, &c., it is evident that an interpreter is needed, and that the true and infallible one is wanting! Where is he? who can find him? ask Christians, they tell you that the Spirit of God is he! and they have His influences! impossible! the Spirit of God is one, and cannot teach contradictory things. It cannot be the author of 666 opposing sects, but only of one true undivided church—nor was it the Spirit of God that led to the divisions, variances, disorder and confusion, evidenced in the broken fragmental sections of modern Christianity; but the devil, who has made them as much the children of disobedience as the Jews of our Lord's day; leading them to conceive that they are in the full and broad blaze of Christian light, and are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing—of no further communications or teachings from heaven—while they know not that they are wretched, and

miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked! they have shut out the light of immediate revelation, and darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, and they know it not!

St. Paul tells us, that "the Gospel was preached to Abraham," by whom? by God Himself—for we do not read of his having any other instructor—and Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." He was taught directly by the Most High God, the Possessor of the heavens and earth; who knew, and knoweth the end from the beginning; light and darkness; evil and good; and if so, how could he possibly be in ignorance and darkness, who was the Friend of this God, and the Father and chief of believers? With whom God talked face to face as with Moses, and not as the "Visitor" expresses it, merely "brought them up from a lower hell to a less foul place;" telling them they were righteous, accepted and blessed, whilst they were living, through ignorance, or otherwise, in immoral and unclean practices! No! whatever men may be, God is no hypocrite—He could not act so; nor could He, being Himself their instructor, possibly wink at evil in Abraham, and others He Himself taught; and at the same time be a just, faithful, and truth-loving being! but the "Visitor" talking unadvisedly as he does, virtually, in spite of these things, accuses the Almighty of deception towards His friends and those He professes to love; and of acting in a way a virtuous and honest man would be ashamed of.

Christ and His disciples did not differ in any respect from Abraham in their faith; but always held him up as an example to their followers; nor did they condemn him, and do away with the laws of polygamy he practised. Christ came not to destroy the law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them; and as polygamy cannot be classed amongst the types, shadows, and ceremonial observances introduced by Moses, and fulfilled and done away in Christ; but formed part of the moral law, ordered by God, and practised by His peculiar people long before the institutions of Moses; it could not have been abrogated in Christ, nor by Him; nor was it forbidden to the gentile converts by the

apostles, when they were required "to abstain from fornication, eating of blood and things offered to idols."

Christ Himself came from a long line of polygamists; lived amongst them; saw its practice every day; and never disapproved of it; at least, it cannot be shown from the writings of the New Testament, that he ever did so.

The passage in Matt. xix. 3, in which the expression "they twain shall be one flesh," so much dwelt on by "the Visitor" as the foundation of all his arguments, refers in its context to *putting away*, the very opposite of marriage; which *former* alone, was condemned by Christ in His address to these polygamists:—"they twain shall be one flesh;" that is, become so on their connexion consequent on marriage, and expressly so in their children—does not imply that a man may not, as Jacob, become one flesh with many, as well as with one; for a man becomes one flesh with every woman with whom he may connect himself; as we see acknowledged every day; for, is it not said of a man who marries consecutively many wives, on the demise of former ones, that he was *one flesh with each and all?* and does not Paul say of what is now the crying sin of monogamic Christendom, "know ye not that he that is joined to an harlot is one flesh?"

"In the New Testament the wife of a man, not wives, is always mentioned, which proves," say some, "that polygamy was not practised by the Christian Church"; but such proves nothing, and as the erudite Poet Milton says, "is used as a generic word in the Old Testament, as well as in New, for instance—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his house; nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, &c. all put in the singular, which does not infer, that a man was only to have *one* wife, any more than that he was to be limited to *one* ox or ass:" The Poet also in his first book on Christian Doctrine, treating on polygamy, further states on this passage; "it would be ridiculous to argue that it is not said houses, but house; not man-servants, but man-servant; not even neighbours, but neighbour; as if it were not the

general custom in laying down commandments of this kind, to use the singular number, not in a numerical sense, but as designating the *species* of the thing intended. With regard to the phrase *they twain*, and not more, shall *be one flesh*, it is to be observed first,—that the *context* refers to the husband, and that wife *only* whom he was seeking to divorce, without intending any allusion to the *number* of his wives; whether one or more. Secondly, marriage is in the nature of a *relation*, and to one *relation* there can be no more than *two* parties. If a man has many sons, his paternal relation towards them *all* is manifold, but towards each individually, is single and complete in itself; by parity of reasoning if a man had many wives, the relation which he bears to each will not be less perfect in itself, nor will the husband be less *one flesh* with each of them, than if he had only one wife. Thus it might be properly said of Abraham with regard to Sarah and Hagar respectively, *these twain were one flesh.*"

Another passage urged, (Tim : iii. 2.) is that a Bishop was to be chosen only from those who had but one wife. Now it does not read, nor are we to understand it, as *only* one wife, in contradistinction to others who had more; but it simply means, from the nature of the duties a Bishop had to perform, it was desirable that he should be a married man; that he should have at least one wife; but there is no *limitation* to the *one*. The same Apostle says—"marriage is honourable in *all*"—he does not exclude polygamic marriages—"and the bed undefiled"—which Jacob's and David's were till Reuben and Absalom defiled them—"but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge"; with reference to which, and to the many wives the people of God formerly had it could be said with far more propriety than now, "what God hath joined let not man put asunder;" for *dark* as we call those ages, they had divine laws regarding marriage; and had wives sealed to them by those who had authority from God to do so; and could, according to His will join a man and a woman together; which divine authority, Christian nations *have not now got,*

there being no divine rule laid down for *them* how to marry or give in marriage acceptably to God, in the written fragments of revelation they are alone possessed of; in consequence of which, different forms are used by different nations, and at different times, as the *civil* powers may direct; many of whom do not allow marriage to be a religious rite *at all*; nor even profess to believe that God hath joined the parties interested in it; and yet they boast of their light, having forgotten even the design of marriage; if they ever knew it; it being with them but a temporary connexion—it may be for a few days only—ending in death. It was not so with our first father Adam, who, as an immortal being, was married for eternity, when no death existed; and the word of God nowhere informs us that this marriage was ever rendered null and void, or dissolved, and Adam remarried for time.—His union with Eve formed the crowning bliss of paradise;—it was interrupted for a season, but is not thereby done away; for if Christ came to restore all things that were *good*, and raise man to a higher estate, and make him a possessor of more than was lost by the fall, surely his *chief blessing* will be restored to him; and Eve and Adam be everlastingly re-united; else there will be a deficiency, a want, an imperfection, felt by man to his eternal loss, in the perfected plans of the Almighty! True there is no marriage in heaven; but that makes it only the more needful and imperative for men while on earth to be married for eternity, according to the revealed laws of God; otherwise they must remain for ever single. Paul knew this doctrine of perfection, when he wrote “the man is not without the woman in the Lord, nor the woman without the man.”

If so, and if, after a long night of darkness, light on this subject has been again revealed from heaven; we surely ought anxiously to give heed to it and consider it worthy at least of investigation. It may seem strange; but we nevertheless affirm, that light *has been* manifested on this, as well as on many other long hidden truths, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, despised though he be; and the nature, the

end, and the ordinances of true marriage, have been restored in these days; and with them polygamy, designed by God not to defile, but heal and keep the people pure; that a numerous and righteous seed might be raised up to serve him.—We consequently find, when those laws were formerly known and practised, that good men, such as Abraham and a host of others, were desired to take many wives; and as an especial blessing, were promised a numerous progeny; while those who fell under the displeasure of the Almighty had their wives taken away as a punishment, and given to others better than they were. As there are always many wicked men, who do not in reality fear and serve God, (in the best communities,) by no other way could the numerous believing females of God’s people have found God-fearing husbands, through whom they could possibly have fulfilled the end of their creation, and the first pure law of God, to multiply and bear righteous seed who should be reared in *the ways of the Lord*; which requires the faith of both parents to effect.—If not, then the daughters of Israel must have been either united to, and placed under the rule of *bad men*, or have gone without husbands. They were not created for the former; which would be only multiplying transgression, and *tend to the deterioration and destruction of the community*; and the latter was always reckoned a calamity, and shunned and dreaded as a reproach among God’s people. How otherwise then could such be enabled to fulfil God’s law to “multiply and replenish the earth” in righteousness, and in a manner pleasing to him? what other method could be devised than God’s plan, to meet the evil? even the plan which he commanded his people to carry out of old, and in setting up his kingdom again upon the earth in these days, has reinstated, not for the gratification of the lusts and passions of fallen men, but that a numerous seed should be raised up to serve him; to be obedient to his teachings through his apostles and prophets in these days; and thus, in their measure, hasten the full establishment of his kingdom, and fulfil his will upon the earth.

That it was to be so in the latter days,

was foreseen of old by the Prophet Isaiah, who foretold the time when, after the judgments of God should have been executed on the rebellious, there should be *few men* left; when a man would be precious as a wedge of gold of Ophir; and when many of the women, spared from their not having been so wicked, for women naturally dependant, are more submissive, and unless led away by men, yield themselves more readily and implicitly to the laws of their Maker—When the women, the prophet says, “by sevens,” or in numbers, “should take hold of one man” of the righteous who survive saying, “We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name”, or be married to you, “to take away our reproach;” and what is this reproach? Barrenness, childlessness, from any cause; not to be obliged, like Jephthah’s daughter, to bewail their virginity. Immediately after, in the connexion of the passage, and in the remainder of the chapter, we see the fruits, or results of the same, in beauty and glory, in excellence and comeliness; and in holiness written on all; “when the Lord shall have purged away the filth of the daughter of Zion;” for they shall all be called holy. How different from the spurious and squeamish holiness of Christendom? How different to its plans and its human institutes, and their results—teeming with corruptions, whoredoms, disease and death!

That the practice of polygamy as now existing in Utah, in like manner proceeds not from fallen lustful desires, is evident from the fact, that it was not sought for, or acted on, till after a revelation was given by the Lord authorizing it; the first believers in the divine mission of Joseph, having joined the Church when nothing but self-denial, persecution, loss of goods, character, wives, children, houses, and all they had, stared them in the face. Cleaving to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, they obey in this as in all other things; and attend to the object, as well as the restrictions contained in the modern revelations of God on the subject; which bear as hard on adultery, and fornication, as those of old did. From these crimes, they

keep themselves pure, and believe, that even “to look on a woman to lust after her, is adultery.” Therefore, when on missions, the Elders abstain even from the appearance of evil; and from any familiarity or intercourse with females, that could possibly lead to ensnarement through them; waiting till the Lord gives them wives *lawfully* through the prophet: for by the revelation, only one man at a time on earth, is authorized to marry God’s people for eternity; which man at present is Brigham Young the Seer, the Revelator and prophet of the Church. So that none can, according to the decrees of heaven, be legally married for eternity, nor Polygamy be lawfully practised, except where the Saints are gathered; the Lord’s kingdom set up; and his people governed by a Theocracy, through immediate revelation. This is the only remedy for the disorganised, disordered, degraded, and earthly governed states of Christendom. God’s plan, by which its impurities and corruptions may be swept away, and its multiplied diseases healed, if healed at all: for the workings of men, left to themselves, tried for the last 1700 years, have utterly and signally failed to cleanse and restore to good the accumulating evils, or even to arrest their progress; all their salves, specifics, partial renovations, have failed to produce health in the body—the plague spots still exist, and the cankering and festering sores refusing to be healed, ever manifest disease and corruption within, and this, because they scoff at God’s plans; and reject the humble ministers of His salvation, who have got the balm of Gilead to restore them, if they would: but though professing Christendom will not, another people, come from out of her midst, has tried; and the wonder of the age, a nation gathering at Utah, is now showing the experiment to mankind. How has it worked even in its infancy amongst the 40 or 50,000 of all classes of men already collected there? some of its fruits are these—not a house of ill fame is to be found there; no seductions take place amongst themselves; no prostitution, or destitution that can lead to it, no drunkenness, swearing, or debauchery; nor hosts of pettifogging

lawyers, with their concomitant evils ; no idlers of high or low degree ; no beggary, or want in the midst of plenty ; but all is order under the government of heaven ; industry and sobriety prevail ; and the people are brethren under one common head, seeking the public weal ; and consequently dwell in a comparative peace and harmony, which no other body on earth can equal. Testimonials of this we adduce from the present Chief Justice of Utah, as well as his predecessor, both of whom were appointed by the U. S. government ; also from Capt. Stansbury, the officer deputed to survey the country—from Col. Thos. L. Kane who travelled with, and was intimately acquainted with their condition ; and from Colonel Steptoe who commanded the troops there, and was to have been appointed governor, but refused ; and with others recommended Brigham Young as the most competent man to be continued in that office.—All of whom, with many others, not only speak well of the people, but in the highest terms of Brigham Young their leader and governor. We also draw your attention to a letter from a lady, married to a Polygamist at Utah, which is no fictitious narrative ; but an undisguised and certified fact, describing her situation and feelings, which is a true index of those of the body of married females there ; all which, ought to tell on the minds of those desirous of attaining to the truth of this, as well as of all other things.

We cannot close without noticing the bigoted remarks of the " Visitor of Nauvoo" in his communications, finding fault with your liberality, in saying, " that had the Mormons professed to be Christians in any other way than that called the way of Mormon their wonderful fortitude would have been adduced as an incontestable proof of divine support." Also " never did, religious emigrants, flying from persecution, encounter hardships with nobler fortitude." These are truths which we appreciate ; but what says the " Visitor?" "Flagrant offenders against public morality and common decency, flying from deserved public indignation hardly merit such praise ;" and that "the horrors" the novel professes to de-

picit cannot be made worse than they are. These assertions we defy the " Visitor" to prove from any unprejudiced, undoubted, and authentic evidence ; and if he supposes that by such falsehoods he can materially injure Mormonism we would remind him, of his own remark, "What falsehood ever added to the cause of truth?" and advise him in future to produce his accusations and proofs together.

He states in his second letter, " He, Joseph Smith, was shot *I believe*, by the mob on his attempting to break jail. Very likely that he would attempt to do so in the face of a mob ! the assertion refutes itself ; but we want proofs for *we know* the Visitor's belief to be a *fiction*. It has been published far and wide, and is so well known, that we wonder at the "Visitor's" ignorance of it, that Joseph Smith, to save bloodshed gave himself up to the authorities of the state of Illinois, under a guarantee from the Governor of safety from the personal violence of the people, to stand his trial on the false accusations brought against him by his old persecutors of the state of Missouri ; and that the small guard of the jail of Carthage, in which he was lodged, having been either overawed or purposely withdrawn, (for they offered no resistance) about 200 mobbers, part of the many who had all along been headed by professed ministers of God *disguised and painted like Indians*, broke into the jail, and murdered Joseph and his brother Hyrum in cold blood, thus fulfilling the threat they had made long before, that " if the law could not reach him, powder and ball should." For previous to this, Joseph had been legally, or rather illegally, tried upwards of 50 times on false accusations ; not one of which could be proved against him, or any thing worthy of bonds ; the Lord having been with him—all which, with his life in full, will shortly be published by the authorities of this Church, to the confusion of her enemies, and the extinction of the *many floating and visionary beliefs*, like those expressed by the " Visitor of Nauvoo."

We cannot say much for the " Visitor's" divinity, or of his judgment who could write, that " a man is responsible



“for a moral sense; but the case is quite different with human opinions concerning God’s Unity, Trinity, or Multiplicity;” i. e. virtually, that a man is not responsible and it matters not whether he worship a true or false God! Does the “Visitor” expect eternal life? or does he believe our Lord when He says “this is Eternal life to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent? We hardly think so; for he makes it clear that he is yet ignorant of Him; and is the worshipper of an unknown God; who may, or may not be, one or three or many more! If so ignorant, and indifferent, and accommodating, how can he be a teacher sent of God? but this we suppose he does not profess to be; and if not, what business has he to teach and preach about God? How, without the true knowledge of God, or knowledge of the only true God, can he in all things possibly distinguish truth from error? How does he know but that the “moral sense” he talks of may not have been imbibed by him through the traditions and teachings of his forefathers? and that had he been born a heathen, or a cannibal, he would have partaken greedily of their sins, without the slightest compunction? and known, or felt little or nothing of the moral sense he harps upon? And how, ignorant of God’s nature and ways, can he make sure that he does not now call good evil, and evil good, put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter? for has not Jesus said that “what is honourable with men is abomination in the sight of God?” and that “no man can know God, except He the Lord reveal Him?” And if the teachings of mere uninspired men have alone been prevalent for the last seventeen centuries; and immediate revelation denied; how does the “Visitor” or any other professed teacher, know, that he will not come under condemnation on “that day when the Lord Jesus will return in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of His Son”? That such may be the case is very likely; for the “Visitor” further says, “we may or we may not know about Christ’s reign &c.!” and how one, who counts His truth and word so lightly, is likely to be accepted; we leave to himself to

answer. We fear he will find nature’s moral sense, will prove but a poor and indifferent substitute for revelation; and do little for him then, if it do not utterly condemn him. We advise him to repent, and, becoming as a little child, to have faith in all God’s revelations modern as well as ancient, and be baptized for the remission of his sins, by those having authority that he may receive the Holy Ghost and see and enter into the kingdom of God.

His arguments regarding Rahab, Abraham, David, and Solomon, are so puerile and flimsy, that a child may upset them. Rahab, he states, was not justified on account of her harlotry! Who ever advanced, or dreamed that she was? her belief in the God of Israel; and her aiding His servants and cause, were the works that proved her faith, and justified and saved her. The “Visitor” says, “it seems strangely assumed that Abraham had many wives, and if he had concubines (which does not appear!) See Gen: xxvi. vi.—they were not wives, nor is concubinage Christianity?”—He has however to acknowledge, however reluctantly, that Abraham had one bastard child by Hagar; for “Sarah only” he says “was Abraham’s wife”; and as a curious proof, he quotes the prophet Isaiah, telling the Jews to “look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bare you!” Who does not know that the Israelites were descended from Sarah? and to whom else were they to look? they had nothing to do with Hagar, or Keturah, or Abraham’s other wives and concubines, or with the numerous children these also bare to Abraham? Gen: xxv. 1 to 6. In what other way could Isaiah speak? He was not trying to show or prove, like the “Visitor,” that Abraham was not a polygamist, on at least a large scale; or that he lived in sin in having numerous bastards, which was winked at by God only on account of his ignorance, and the infantile and dark state of his mind; which God failed to enlighten, and which prevented God from showing him, or making him understand the evil of his course? No! Isaiah knew better, though he also lived in a dark age, and like Abraham, was only brought into “a less foul place than the foul-

est"! No! this Prophet, and all sent of God, *knew* that Abraham had the *true faith* and knew the *true God*, and *Jesus whom he sent*; which was vouched for by Christ Himself, who said "Abraham saw my day and was glad," and held him forth as worthy of example—"If ye were Abraham's seed," said he to the Jews, "ye would do the works of Abraham," and *these works were of God*; being contrasted by our Lord with those of the Jews to whom he spake, saying, "ye are of your father the devil, and his works will ye do." But we are no more sure of this, than we are that the "Visitor" knows nothing of the matter he has presumed so dogmatically to write on. Of David he says, "when David took an *added wife*, Bathsheba, it is expressly written the thing displeased the Lord." This is a gloss, or perversion of the word of the Lord, and an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of his readers, whom he must consider remarkably ignorant of their Bible; an *added wife!* as if Bathsheba was the only one David, (*till then a monogamist!*) had ever taken! We wonder at the "Visitor's" attempting to write so deceitfully, when every child is acquainted with the sacred history of David, and *knows* that he had, long before Bathsheba's case, taken *many wives*; and that God was displeased with him, not for adding to his wives, which God Himself had done for him, as before shown, but because, led by passion alone, and without divine authority, he took *another man's wife*; and thereby committed adultery, and the murder it led to; therefore God was displeased with him, and as a punishment, took away the wives He had given him, and gave them to a neighbour of his better than he.

Of Solomon, the "Visitor" talks in the same disingenuous way, as if the Lord was angry with him simply for taking many wives! His case may be read, and is as well known as David's—known to all, that it was not because he was a polygamist, that the Lord was displeased with him; but because he loved many *strange* women; women of the Moabites, Edomites, Zidonians, and and Hittites, of the nations of which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, "ye shall not go in to them, nor shall

"they come in to you, for surely they shall turn away your heart after their gods." "Solomon *clave to these in love*, and his wives turned away his heart after their Gods;" therefore was the Lord angry with him, and for no other cause.

The "Visitor's" other remarks are on a par with these, either "twists," as he calls it, of scripture; puerile arguments; or bare and presumptuous assertions; which we have not time, nor much more inclination to touch further upon, we will therefore close with a notice of a few of his assertions:

"Mormonism," he states, "is a destructive policy—how can one call it a religious movement?" "spirit wife hood, *alias boundless self abandonment*, Dagon, Belial, Moloch all in one"! like the "Visitor's" Unity, Trinity, and Multiplicity! "Joseph Smith was a fighter and a drunkard; so openly, that no creature of common sense could see him reeling about the streets of Nauvoo, and then hear his "thus saith the Lord" without disgust."

"I know enough of the man and of place, to believe that such were said of him"

*Belief not knowledge; no proof at all given.*

"I have pity on the woman who is *stripped of every thing but her virtue*, and finds that assailed in the deep woods of Utah, or in the great Salt city."

"That woman too is terribly guilty, the moment she *knows* the knavish managers of the Mormon movement are using their female converts for their lusts, if she puts forth one single step towards them."

"No opinion can justify a disobedience of what God has written on every human heart." Has God written on every human heart that Polygamy is sin? We simply ask the question—If written on the "Visitor of Nauvoo's" human teachers and tradition wrote it,

Females, by his account, are *first stripped of every thing but virtue*—i. e. the Mormons first rob them of every thing they have, and then assail them, and assault their *virtue in the deep woods of Utah*, or even in the city itself, so that they cannot escape! *Strange!* and all known to the "Visitor" if not

from personal knowledge, at least from true and credible evidences; which he chooses however, for the best of reasons, to keep secret; which we suppose he will do till the great day of judgment reveals them.

We quite agree with him in saying, that "a woman is terribly guilty did she *know* the Mormon leaders used their female converts for their lusts; and put forth a single step towards them;" but that a woman prostitutes herself in receiving the truths and doctrines of Mormonism, none but a *bigot* would recklessly advance and affirm—so we leave this matter.

As for Joseph Smith's character, like our Lord's, it will stand pure when all his vilifiers have passed away, and have been forgotten.—We are the less careful about it, having the testimony of hundreds of unimpeachable witnesses who knew him personally, and revered him as a man of God; which we believe rather than the unsupported assertions of the "Visitor." We are willing that he and Mormonism should be tried here and hereafter by their fruits; for our Saviour says, "do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? So a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

The "Visitor" believes he is guided by a purer rule and superior light than Abraham had;—does he expect to reach a higher heaven? or is he ignorant, or has he forgotten, that Paul and the other disciples of Jesus thought otherwise; the former of whom tells us, "the gospel was preached to Abraham," and says "know ye not that they which are of faith are the children of Abraham?" "so then they which be of faith are *blessed with faithful Abraham*." He did not entertain the presumptuous idea of outstripping or superseding that polygamist in the glory and favour of God he had attained to; for he knew that the God of his fathers, had called Himself "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" and said "this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial to all generations." Ex. iii. 15. We Mormons, in like manner, are quite content to have our lot and part under Abraham as our father in the kingdom of God,

whatever the "Visitor" or others may think, say, or publish to the contrary; for, unless we have the faith and works of Abraham, we cannot expect to be found amongst those who shall sit down with that Patriarch and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. Should however any with the "Visitor's" views chance to get there, would they not be sorely annoyed at the presence of these great polygamists; would not their divine purity be shocked and they be out of their element? or what is more to the point;—made sensible of their awful wickedness and folly in repudiating the plans of the Almighty, and lifting up their puny hands and polluted tongues against the Lord and His anointed ones;—would they not find the place in reality a *hell*, instead of a heaven; and if so, do they know of any other heaven they can go to?

But now for the fruits, by which the "Visitor" and Mormonism are to be tried. Of the former we know nothing except that he has made unfounded and unproved accusations; unrighteous and unadvised, and uncalled for assertions; and borne false witness and taken up a reproach against his neighbours, the Mormons; for we claim this title in accordance with our Lord's parable of the good Samaritan.

All which we conceive are not the choice fruits of the spirit!—On the other side, how is it that the evil doctrines, teachings, organization, practices and life, of Joseph Smith have brought forth good fruits? and that a body of his followers, gathered together from all quarters of the globe, to the amount of about 40,000 souls,—many of them as intelligent men as are to be found on the earth—are living as a peculiar people, zealous of good works; who have *forced* the world to acknowledge that they are not to be equalled for their industry, energy and indomitable perseverance? How is it that their chief Judges sent by the supreme government and other officials and strangers residing amongst them, have given strong testimony in their favour, in order if possible to disabuse the minds of those ignorant of their walk, which have been prejudiced by the vile, slanderous, and groundless reports of their enemies? How is it that they speak highly of

their sobriety, uprightness, unity, brotherly love and confidence in each other, and tried hospitality and kindness even to their enemies the mobber emigrants! nay more, of the harmony existing in their families; of the modesty and irreproachable conduct of their females; of the evident dependence on, and fear of God, and devotion to his will manifested by them as a community; of their private as well as public acknowledgment of him in all their acts; and the prominent observance of all his known commands; evidenced by the absence of drunkenness, strumpets, grog-shops and houses of ill-fame and multiplicity of lawyers with all their concomitant strife and evils, so rife in the highly civilized and Christianized cities of Europe and America? how is it that good fruits are manifested in the order and heavenly rule that prevails; and the wisdom, plainness, and simplicity of their laws, which give no room for lawyers to subvert, and turn them into a source of personal gain? How is it that the situations of the Judges are perfect sinecures, except when adjudging the disputes of the emigrants passing through the country? the saints having bound themselves not to go to law with their brethren—and how is it, that from their exodus and settlement in Utah, there have been no cases of seduction amongst themselves, and but a solitary one of adultery, which was punished with death, until the *avatar* of the U. S. troops? and if these brought the old habits of professing Christendom, drunkenness, seduction, whoredoms, corruption and death with them; and succeeded, in however small a measure, in inoculating some of the most ignorant and weakest of the Mormon body, it ought surely to be anything but a credit, and source of joy and boasting; though used as such by their enemies! but here in this last reproach, as well as in all other cases, truth will prevail; and, as of the Apostolic Christians of old, the fair fame of the Latter Day's Saints will out live the slanders of their defamers; and in due course of time their real characters will be acknowledged even by Christendom, when troubled, humbled, and brought low by the judgments of the Almighty.

Talk of the boundless self-abandonment of the Mormon Elders! what other community of men in the known world, indiscriminately taken, will produce devoted, self-sacrificing men like them? What body numbering thousands, would admit of hundreds being suddenly called from their midst to go to distant and strange lands, without purse or scrip; to preach the gospel they profess to prize? and where could such be found, who, without a murmur, would joyfully leave their comfortable homes, their farms, their business, their wives, children, friends and associates, and every earthly thing they hold dear, to go forth amongst their enemies; to encounter, for a series of years till honourably released,—reproach, revilings, buffetings, scorn, privations, and deprivations of all the blessings they were in undisturbed and lawful enjoyment of in their homes? and this, that haply they may save some of these enemies—that they may bring the light of truth and freedom to honest-hearted, but Priest-ridden men-taught souls, who are being led by blind men;—that they may make known the will of God in these days, and to this generation, as revealed to Joseph Smith and His prophets; and tell them of what Jesus, the living Saviour, has commissioned them to proclaim for the salvation of men, and the honour, upbuilding, and righteousness of His kingdom, set up for the last time on this earth! Yet all this is done! and men are thus called every few months at Utah! and chosen Elders to go forth in faith, and in the name of Jesus, whom they know has, through the instrumentality of His Prophets, sent them; not, as falsely stated, to creep into houses as deceivers, to lead astray silly women laden with divers lusts: no! but, as the order of righteousness pervades the whole system, they are enjoined not to preach the gospel privately to individual women dependant on parents or husbands! or to baptize such without the consent of their natural protectors! and in visiting families, or households, they are told to go to the head of the same, be they men or women, and first offer the truth to them, who thenceforth are answerable for its rejection, not only in regard

to themselves, but for all under their authority.—The Elders are also enjoined to keep themselves pure! and to refrain from any familiarity, or intercourse with females, that might lead even to the appearance of evil! remembering that they have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, and that, should they, through transgression lose it, they will cease to be ministers of the spirit as well as of the letter, to their own destruction for they will be cast out—whereas, if faithful, they will obtain an abundant reward from the possessor of heaven and of earth.. In this spirit they go forth! and the world is challenged and defied to convict them of immoralities.—Thirteen have come to this country; and on the rejection of their testimony, have chiefly returned. These have come in contact with large bodies of the community—have been evil spoken against as blasphemers and deceivers; but who can lay any moral evil to their charge, except falsely? righteously it cannot be done; and we challenge the communities they have appeared amongst to name aught against them of a private immoral nature; or to charge them with crime! On the contrary, those with whom they have mingled cannot but have remarked the temperance in all things; the humility; self denial for the truth's sake; patience, devotedness, purity of life and conduct; and other virtues that distinguished them.—Now what has all this to do with the Visitor's false accusation of boundless self-abandonment? and how are all these fruits to be reconciled, with an evil and corrupt source? Will not the Elders bear comparison with those who "*divine for money and preach for hire*"? who first make their bargain in pounds, shillings, and pence, be it more or less, and on the understanding thereof, go forth in professed faith to preach their Gospel? or will the above mentioned fruits of Mormonism compare with the beggary, squalid poverty and misery; with the drunken and lustful haunts; the inebriety and prostitution; the pride and evil speaking; hatred and alienation; strife, litigation, and endless law suits, so rife in enlightened and boasting Christendom? We leave the public to judge.

Once for all; if polygamy is so very obnoxious as the "Visitor" and the refined clergy of modern Christianity affirm,—if God is so displeased, man so degraded, and a community so debased by it as they assert, let them, like men of God, point out chapter and verse condemning it. Let the scriptures have their simple, literal and only true way of interpretation;—let them for once appeal to the law and the testimony, and adopt the Bible as the standard by which to decide; instead of the foul, scandalous, and scurrilous aspersions hurled forth with hurricane and insane violence both from Press and Pulpit, to annihilate, if possible, us poor Mormons! as if truth would bow and yield to the mere opinions of a capricious, wavering, and hireling Priesthood, making merchandise of the souls of men; irritated and trembling for the stability and prophesied downfall of their systems, powerless to save as that of the great goddess: Diana! No! if they cannot conform to these conditions, let them frankly acknowledge and renounce their errors, and cease to pervert the ways of the Lord, or His withering blast shall overtake them for their arrogance in opposing the plans and work of the Almighty—for we declare in the name of Jesus Christ, whose servants we are; that the principles of the Gospel as taught by the ministers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, are true;—that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet, called by the voice of God, and the visions of the Most High; that the Book of Mormon is a divine and inspired work, containing an abridged history of the Aborigines of the Continent of America;—that the statements relative to the character of Joseph Smith and the people of Utah are flagrant untruths, which we positively know from the experience we have had;—that the character of Brigham Young has never been impeached by the President of the United States, or any other virtuous individual, who had the opportunity of judging of it from personal observation, or trustworthy evidence;—that a house of ill-fame never existed amongst the Mormons; nor was fornication known till the U. S. troops, with similar kindred spirits,

aking advantage of their hospitality, succeeded, to a small extent, in seducing and decoying innocent and inexperienced females, with whom they absconded to the remoter settlements; such, like midnight assassins prowled round and insinuated themselves into the houses of widows and orphans, seeking to take advantage of their comparatively defenceless conditions, to satiate their lusts; leaving the relatives of injured humanity, and the Mormons at large, to declaim loudly against their infamous doings. But these were not of them, though they came in amongst them; and they have gone out, never, it is hoped, to return. It is from men like these, either disappointed in the gratification of their accustomed lusts, and other vices, or seeking to justify themselves on their success, and cloak their own misdeeds, that most of the false and slanderous reports against the Mormons have originated; which time only will effectually obliterate.

We again leave the public to judge of all these things, having we are afraid trespassed far too long on your and their patience. However, as we do not wish to renew our correspondence, but to make this article serve once for all as an exposé, as far as regards polygamy, of our views and doctrines; be-

ing sensible that a public Newspaper is no place for lengthened controversy, we trust you will in justice insert this as a solitary communication; as you have done the numerous anonymous articles of our opposers; and thanking you for the liberal spirit you have shown towards Mormonism, in professing "to give even the Devil his due," and looking to the same liberality to afford space for this;

We are Sir, with best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

R. SKELTON,  
J. P. MEIK.

Elders of the Church of Jesus  
Christ of Latter Day Saints.

*Calcutta, December, 1855.*

Having perused the above letter, I hereby notify to all men my entire and hearty concurrence in the views therein advocated; and add my testimony to the truth of the statements made by the writers thereof.

W. H. C. SMITH,

Elder of the Church of Jesus  
Christ of Latter Day Saints.

# APPENDIX.

EXTRACT FROM THE "LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR."—No. 40, VOL. XV. DATED 1ST. OCTOBER, 1853.

## UTAH—ITS GOVERNOR, SOCIETY, AND INSTITUTIONS.

(Extract of a Letter from the Hon'ble L. H. Read, Chief Justice of Utah.)  
(From the Bath (U. S.) Advocate.)

Great Salt Lake City, Tuesday, June, 23, 1853.

W. C. Rhodes—Dear Sir—On Monday morning (6th) I waited on his Excellency, Governor Young, exhibited to him my commission, and was by him duly sworn and installed as Chief Justice of Utah. I was received by Governor Young with marked courtesy and respect. He has taken pains to make my residence here agreeable. The Governor, in manners and conversation, is a polished gentleman. Very neat and tasty in dress, easy and pleasant in conversation, and I think a man of decided talent, and strong intellectual qualities. In person, he very strongly resembles our deceased fellow citizen, W. W. McCay. I have heard him address the people once on the subject of Man's Free Agency. He is a very excellent speaker. His gesture uncommonly graceful, articulation distinct, and speech pleasant. His voice resembles very much Judge Hiram Gray, of Elmira. I was extremely edified by his address and manner. The Governor is a first rate business man. As Civil Governor of the Territory, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, we would naturally suppose he had as much to do as one man could well attend to; but in addition to those employments he is also President of the Church—a station which is no sinecure by any means. His private business is extensive; he owns several grist and saw mills, is extensively engaged in farming operations, all which he superintends personally. I have made up my mind that no man has been more grossly misrepresented than Governor Young, and that he is a man who will reciprocate kindness and good intentions as heartily and as freely as any one—but if abused, or crowd-

ed hard, I think he may be found exceedingly hard to handle.

Salt Lake City is a wonder. It is not quite six years since the first pioneers entered this valley. There was not then one civilized inhabitant within five hundred miles, nor the least vestige of civilization or improvement. The people had nothing in the world, except what they brought with them in their wagons, across the plains from the States. The soil is naturally hard and dry, and very little is produced without irrigation. For the first year or two, the settlers suffered very severely from want of provisions and proper shelter. They subsisted mainly upon roots, and were sometimes compelled to eat horses and dogs. At present, however, the people raise an abundance of all kinds of vegetables, and a large surplus of wheat and coarse grain, some of the finest beef I ever saw. The city is laid out in squares, and the whole number of acres in the corporate limits is not less than two thousand; each lot contains about one acre. Any person of good character and industrious habits can have a lot for a very small sum, provided he will settle on it and build a house. Every lot in the city can be irrigated without much expense or trouble. The city proper contains about 7,000 permanent inhabitants. I have noticed a large number of very well built and comfortable dwelling-houses, and some excellent, well cultivated gardens. The public buildings already completed are convenient, well constructed, and present a very creditable outside appearance. The city and country are well provided with ingenious mechanics of every branch of trade.

The people all appear to be doing well. They are very industrious and orderly, and I see no reason why they cannot enjoy themselves as well as their fellow-citizens in any other part of the Union. I have attended church twice. The mode of worship is very like that of other denominations. The sermons I heard, were well delivered, and creditable. The music excellent, being vocal and instrumental. The house of worship is very commodious, and the congregation usually numbers about one thousand.

The principal men are New-Yorkers and New-Englanders, but a majority of Western New-Yorkers. I have got acquainted with most of them, and find them all courteous, kind, and gentlemanly. We have here, a few Steuben people. Governor Young and his brothers, Phineas, John, Joseph, and Lorenzo, formerly resided in Tyrone, near Captain Sebring's. Their father settled there about 1819, and owned a farm there for some time. Phineas is a printer, and formerly worked in Bath for our esteemed fellow-citizen, David Rumsey, deceased. John Barnard, formerly of Jasper, is here and doing well. I have also become acquainted with an aged lady, a Mrs. Cory, sister of John R. Stephens, of Hornellsville, and daughter of Mr. Uriah Stephens, late of Carnisteeo. I find also a large number from right around Steuben, Yates, Alleghany, Ontario, Tompkins, Chemung, and Livingston. These are all New-Yorkers still, and make my residence much more pleasant than it otherwise would be. We get together

occasionally, and talk about "the old country" and old friends.

Nearly the whole population of Salt Lake City and Utah Territory are Mormons. I doubt whether more than two hundred *outsiders* can be found. The state of society is different from anything we have been accustomed to. All matters, or nearly so, pertaining to religious and domestic affairs, are regulated by the Church, controversies of every kind are settled by the Ecclesiastical Councils.

The plurality system, as it is called here, (or polygamy in fact) prevails extensively; but those who suppose that licentiousness or looseness of manners or morals prevails to any extent, are very much mistaken. The women are exceedingly modest and circumspect in their deportment. I have had the pleasure of an introduction to a number who are very sensible and agreeable, and I think, compare fully with the well-bred ladies of the States. They are from New York and New England, (those I am speaking of,) and differ in nothing from their sisters in the Eastern States. From all I can see and learn, there is less licentiousness and vulgarity in this city and territory than any other place of equal population in the United States. The men are jealous of all interference in their domestic affairs, and seduction and adultery, if discovered are apt to be punished by death of the offender. Some cases of this kind have happened here. Truly your friend,

LAZ. H. READ.

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EXTRACT FROM "THE MORMON."—DATED 18TH AUG. 1855.

**A FEW FACTS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE EDITORS OF THE UNITED STATES, AND OF ALL HONEST MEN.**

A GREAT hue and cry has been raised lately about the Mormons. One would think, if there was any credit to be placed in the press, that they were the most corrupt debauchees, the most infamous impostors, the blackest-hearted traitors in existence; and, in fact, that Utah was an ulcer; a canker in the nation;

that her citizens were the greatest miscreants and scamps, and that her cities were dens of infamy more degenerate than Sodom: dangerous alike to the morals, chastity, and political integrity of this great nation.

Either the above is true, or many of the public journals are maligners, makers and issuers of falsehoods;



or, to say the least, most egregiously ignorant of the subjects about which they write. Now we have no objections to men speaking the truth about the Mormons; truth in its fullest sense; we have no objections to our religion, morals, politics, and general deportment being canvassed; we don't object to men differing with us in opinion—it is their right; and furthermore, it is manly and just to express fairly a candid, honest sentiment; but when we see men controlling the public press, collecting and publishing every petty story and statement, however foolish and ridiculous, and then, with uplifted hands and turned up eyes, expressing a holy horror at, and endorsing, things which they positively know to be lies, and got up either out of sheer malice, religious acrimony for political motives, or to make a penny, what can we think?

We have no apology to make for the Mormons. These statements are either true or false; if true, they are susceptible of proof; if false, then why this clamor? Maligners generally do not take the trouble to investigate; the truth is not a part of their creed, or, if a part, it is only used when falsehood and detraction will not serve their purpose better. With such characters, then, we have nothing to do; we leave them to their fate. There is another class, however, that we feel inclined to disabuse, by laying before them correct principles, and putting them in possession of facts; such are either honest men or saints, who, in many instances, stand in amazement at the bold, audacious falsehoods that are unblushingly uttered by corrupt men, and endorsed by a venal press. We wish to throw a mantle of protection around them by giving them truths that would make their maligners blush, if shame indeed has any part in their composition.

No editor of common sense need be told that he knows he is publishing and endorsing falsehood, when he tells nine-tenths of the cock-and-bull stories that are in circulation about the Mormons. No man in a public capacity, and that is acquainted with

current events, but must know better; he cannot conduct a public journal without being in possession of this information. Where, then, does this puerile and fretful malice come from? Is it in retaliation for some real or imaginary wrong? Whom have the Mormons injured? Has any body been robbed, plundered, despoiled, or anywise injured by the Mormons, in the United States? Have any of the citizens of the United States, in passing through Utah Territory, been injured in property, freedom, life, or character? We know that many attempts have been made to show this; in most instances, for the paltry consideration of selling a book; in others, from religious and social prejudices, and yet in others, retaliation for the exposure of their vice, lasciviousness, and corruption; and we are sorry to have to say that for kindness, courtesy, and benevolence, in many instances, the blackest and basest ingratitude has been returned; but we are at the defiance of the world to prove that any man has been injured, or jeopardized, in life, liberty, limb, property, or character, by any authorized act of the Mormons. Several cases have been sought to be made out, but they have all signally failed. Is it a crime to be in Utah? If so, who is to blame for it? Our very existence there is through coercion.

But the Mormons are disloyal. Was it disloyal in the Mormons, when disfranchised and driven from their homes, when among the Indians in the desert, and called upon to send five hundred men to the Mexican war—(their quota, according to the ratio of assessment of the States, would have been from one to four.)—they sent five hundred? Why is it that other States are not accused of disloyalty? They are several hundred times behind the Mormons in this instance, in sustaining the national honor.

We quote the following extract of a Lecture delivered before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, by Col. T. L. Kane, on his return from Winter Quarters on the Missouri River:

" And now they were asked, in the midst of the Indian country, to surrender over five hundred of their best men for a war march of thousands of miles to California, without the hope of return till after the conquest of that country. Could they view such a proposition with favor ?

" But the feelings of country triumphed. The Union had never wronged them : ' You shall have your battalion at once, if it has to be a class of our Elders,' said one, a ruling Elder.

" A central ' mass meeting' for council, some harangues at the more remotely scattered camps, an American flag brought out from a storehouse of things rescued, and hoisted to the top of a tree mast, and in three days the force was reported, mustered, organized, and ready to march."

The following Petition will throw some light upon our late official doings:

**TO HIS EXCELLENCY FRANKLIN PIERCE,**

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Your petitioners would respectfully represent: that

Whereas, Governor Brigham Young possesses the entire confidence of the people of this Territory, without distinction of party or sect; and from personal acquaintance, and social intercourse, we find him to be a firm supporter of the Constitution and Laws of the United States, and a tried pillar of Republican Institutions; and having repeatedly listened to his remarks, in private as well as in public assemblies, do know he is the warm friend and able supporter of Constitutional Liberty, the rumours published in the States to the contrary notwithstanding; and having canvassed to our satisfaction his doings as Governor, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and also the disposition of the appropriation for public buildings for the Territory;

We do most cordially and cheerfully represent, that the same has been expended to the best interest of the nation; and

Whereas his re-appointment would better subserve the Territorial interest than the appointment of any other man, and would meet with the gratitude of the entire inhabitants of the Territory, and his removal would

cause the deepest feelings of sorrow and regret; and it being our unqualified opinion, based upon the personal acquaintance which we have formed with Governor Young, and from our observation of the results of his influence and administration in this Territory, that he possesses in an eminent degree every qualification necessary for the discharge of his official duties, and unquestioned integrity and ability; that he is decidedly the most suitable person that can be selected for that office.

We therefore take great pleasure in recommending him to your favorable consideration, and do earnestly request his re-appointment as Governor, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for this Territory.

Great Salt Lake City, Utah Territory,

December 30, 1854.

J. T. KINNEY, Ch. Justice U. S. Supreme Court Utah.

E. J. STEPTOE, Lt. Col. U. S. Army.

JOHN F. REYNOLDE, Bvt. Maj. 3d Arty. U. S. Army.

RUFUS INGALLS, Capt. U. S. Army.

SYLVESTER MOWRY, Lieut. U. S. Army.

LATHETT L. LIVINGSTON, Lt. 3rd U. S. Arty.

JNO. G. CHANDLER, Lt. 3d U. S. Arty.

ROBT. O. TYLER, Lt. 3d Arty.

BENJN. ALLSTON, Bvt. 2nd Lt. 1st Dgs. U. S. Army.

CHAS. A. PERRY, Sutler U. S. Army.

WM. G. RANKIN, (Quartermaster's Clerk.)

HORACE R. WIRTZ, Medical Staff U. S. Army.

LEO. SHAVER, Asst. Jus. S. C. of U. S. Ter. of Utah.

WM. I. APPLEBY, Clerk Supreme and First District Courts U. S. Ter. of Utah.

CURTIS E. BOLTON, (Book-keeper of Mr. Perry.)

A. W. BABBITT, Secretary of Utah Territory.

JOSEPH HOLLMAN, U. S. District Atty. for Utah.

Beside the above names were also attached the signatures of all the Territorial Officers and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, with some twenty names of Merchants doing bu-

business in the Territory, not members of the Church.

Again, after being ostracised by the Government, and virtually banished the United States, and obliged to locate in the wilderness, having no resting place but the valleys, no society but Indians—exiles, wanderers and outcasts; every attempt having been made by our enemies to sever fraternal relations;—having no government, no society, no brothers, no home. Was it, under these peculiar circumstances, disloyal to organize a provisional government, with avowed attachment to that government by whom we had thus been treated? Was it disloyal, after such organization, to seek for and obtain acknowledgment by the United States? Or further, was it disloyal to seek a territorial organization; or is it, to seek for admission into the Union as a State? In what does disloyalty consist? Is it a phantom in some body's brain, or a living, tangible reality?

But we are mixed up with the Indians. We can't help that, gentlemen—you forced us into the position that we now occupy. However, we are no more mixed up with them than Oregon, Minesota, and some parts of Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, California and Texas are. But you are friendly with the Indians. So are the United States, or profess to be; they make treaties with them, build them mills, place farmers in their midst, raise them grain, and teach them to cultivate the earth; they send missionaries and plant schools among them. Sometimes the United States do this, and sometimes make war with, and chastise them. So do we. For such purposes are appropriations made to Territories by Congress. In these matters, like every other Territory, we are governed by the policy of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, appointed by the President of the United States. Our superintendent is not quite as sanguinary as some, but we think quite as efficient, as the returns will show.

California has expended during the last three years, as duplicated by Lieutenant Beals, three hundred thousand dollars, Oregon, one hun-

dred and seventy five thousand dollars, besides the military expenses paid by the Commissioners of Indian Affairs in Washington; while Utah, as statistics will show, expended only thirty-one thousand dollars; of which only \$24,600 has been received up to the present time, and there are as many Indians in Utah as there are in California. The jurisdiction of the superintendency of Gov. Young extends over the tribes of the Shoshones as well as the Utahs. California has had an army to sustain, and we have sustained ourselves, and done our own fighting. All the military defence has been done by the "Nauvoo Legion." for which there has been an appropriation of twenty thousand nine hundred and forty dollars; but never yet paid up, or was not up to the 14th of last June. Instead of Gov. Young having over-drawn upon these small appropriations, there is now, to the credit of Utah, twenty-five thousand dollars not yet disbursed. Whereas California, besides the enormous sum of three hundred thousand dollars duplicated by Lieutenant Beals, has placed the Government under about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to sustain Col. Steptoe's command for one winter only, and that merely while on the way to fulfil their heavier duties in that State. All these expenses, when compared with the expenses of Utah, while under the administration of Gov. Young, display an economy seldom found in either State or Territorial departments. Is it disloyal to economise the funds of the United States.

In view of the above we had anticipated more honor; we are aware that popular journals have to be sustained, and that men having both property and political position at stake cannot be expected to sustain principles that they perhaps don't believe, and that are unpopular; granted—what then? We don't seek to make proselytes of editors, nor to find fault with their views; all we ask is common honesty, in the room of detraction and falsehood. It surely has not become unpopular to tell the truth. Or if so, is it unpopular to suppress, or avoid telling falsehood.

You are polygamists ; admitted, so was Abraham, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets. David, and a host of others in the old testament, and their practices in this respect, are no where repudiated in the new ; if you have changed the order of God and introduced monogamy you have done it upon your own responsibility, and the corruption, lasciviousness and abominations that every where prevail among you show how futile the philosophy of man is when opposed to the order of God.

But it is so funny. Be it so, we are no way puritanical in our feelings, and can enjoy and perpetrate a joke, as well as our neighbors, all in good feelings ; talk about us, caricature us if you like, make and have your fun ; we must also claim the same privilege ; but don't make use of misrepresentation, detraction, and falsehood ; don't " steal the livery of God to serve the devil in," turn up holy eyes and exclaim against the abominations of the Mormons, when you know that you are a great deal more corrupt, and that independent of your thousands of *nymphs du pave*, you have other cyprians, in every nook and corner. You do things, and admit, without censure, of things being done in secret, which we despise ; and you honor many of those concerned in these abominations by admitting them into what is termed the *best of society* ; this you know and submit to, whether of necessity or by choice others as well as yourselves know. Now such a state of wretchedness, hypocrisy, and adultery does not exist in Utah ; there is no necessity for it, for while the physical laws, governing and controlling mankind beyond the modern counter-laws of man, are observed by the advocates of polygamy, the higher law, as carried out in the Abrahamic policy under God, before the Mosaic law, from which you affirm springs all your laws ; and which law, in respect to polygamy, it confirms. Nor can a law of God since given be produced, repudiating the former law or changing it to new relations. This higher law, in which exists perfect order, without which it is not the same in which God gives to man a companion or more than one, you

repudiate, and live under all its consequent hypocrisy, abomination, broken vows, and shame, and attempt with debauched hands and corrupt soul to sustain a state of society of all things most abominable in the sight of God ;—none of which is found in Utah. For there those associations legitimately entered into and honorably carried out, in view and with sufficient guarantee that a progeny well provided for, and honorably introduced into the world, shall not entail the withering curse of illegitimacy upon the coming generation that now exists with you. But you do not acknowledge these things by law, nor acknowledge them in your family—so much the worse, and so much more hypocritical. You profess one thing and practise another ; you profess to sustain laws that you daily violate. You profess chastity, truth, and conjugal fidelity to your wives, which you have pledged before God, and which before that same God you violate ; forsaking and leaving the company of a truthful, confiding wife, you illicitly seek the embraces of an acknowledged harlot ; your conduct is a living lie, you profess truth with lips, and break it to the heart ; time rolls on, you are exposed, and with that exposure stand proclaimed a hypocrite, and the confidence and happiness of a loving, confiding wife gone—gone for ever ; but if not exposed you are none the less a hypocrite. Such is the case with thousands, and corruption and deceit is entailed, with all the horrors of disease in arithmetical progression upon the generations that follow.

You say we are immoral. We quote the following, as we prefer the testimony of others to our own, on this subject.

(From the Missouri Republican, 1847.)

" We notice in the papers of Philadelphia, that T. L. Kane, Esq., delivered a lecture on Tuesday last, before the Historical Society of this city, on which occasion he reviewed the history of the Mormon people from the period of their ejection from Nauvoo, to the time of their settlement in Deseret. \* \* \* \* \*

" I have given you in terms, the opinion my four years experience has enabled

me to form of the Mormons, preferring to force you to deduce it for yourselves from the facts. But I will add, that I have not yet heard a single charge against them as a community—against their habitual purity of life, their willing integrity, their toleration of religious differences of opinion, their regard for the laws, their devotion to the constitutional government under which we live—that I do not, from my own observation, or upon the testimony of others, know to be unfounded.”

The following is from the speech of the Hon. Trueman Smith, delivered in the Senate of the United States, July 8, 1850. Published in Washington. Gideon & Co, Printers.

After reading a letter from Dr. Bernhisel, of whom he says, “Dr. Bernhisel is the agent of the people of Deseret, he is a native of the city of New York, a gentleman of respectability and intelligence, and worthy of all confidence,” he continues, “The statement of Dr. Bernhisel touching the wonderful progress made by the people of Deseret, within a space of time, incredibly brief, is abundantly confirmed by a letter which I received from General John Wilson, dated at Salt Lake City, Sept. 6th, 1849, from which I submit the following extract :

“A more orderly, honest, industrious, and civil people I have never been among than these, (meaning the inhabitants of Great Salt Lake City,) and it is incredible how much they have done here in so short a time. In this city, which contains now, as I believe, about four to five thousand inhabitants, I have not met in a citizen a single idler, or any person who looks like a loafer. Their prospects for crops are fair, and there is a spirit and energy in all that you see that cannot be equalled in any city of any size that I have ever been in, and I will add, not even in old Connecticut. Gen. Wilson is now Navy Agent at San Francisco, and is a citizen of the first respectability.”

The following is from the pen of Mr. Fuller, editor of the New York Mirror, who visited Salt Lake—not the present Mr. Fuller, his former colleague, under date of—:

A more industrious, honest, law-abiding community can hardly be found. The municipal regulations of Salt Lake City

are admirable, and more moral (barring their open polygamy) and orderly citizens we have never seen in any part of the world. They number very many men of intelligence and education, and a residence of several weeks among them failed to note a single “vagabond” in their midst. They are exceedingly hospitable to California emigrants, and furnish them supplies at reasonable rates. Their settlement is a great benefit to “overland travellers.”

At the Legislative party, given in Salt Lake City, at the Social Hall, on the 1st of January, 1855, an address from Hon. J. F. Kinney, Chief Justice United States Supreme Court, Utah Territory, being announced, he rose and said:

“This is to be an occasion of rejoicing—this a time when the mind will reflect on the past history of this country. I can scarcely realize that we are here, ten or fifteen hundred miles from civilization, and yet we are in the very midst of it—not only civilization, but the most *perfect refinement*. I am reminded of the words of Daniel Webster, on the occasion of celebrating the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers. “The same heaven,” he remarked, “is over our heads, the same earth under our feet; but all else, how changed! The same remarks may appropriately be applied to this Territory, when we consider only seven years have gone since this people landed here, without food to support them, living on herbs and roots, and behold now the splendor, the magnificence and taste that has been displayed here, we may wonder and be astonished.”

On another occasion, at the re-union of the Members of the Assembly, at the dwelling of the Hon. A. W. Babbitt, Judge Kinney spoke as follows:

“I do not rise to tell a story, to offer a toast, or propose a conundrum; but to express my feelings. I have watched the doings of the Legislative Assembly during the past session. I see you have adopted the wise policy of enacting few and simple laws. Those governments are accounted the most wise which have enacted the fewest and simplest laws. You do not wish to rule your people by law; you try to rule them by love. I speak this not merely to eulogise Gov. Young, or.

his council. Everything in this Valley bespeaks the enterprise, the industry, the refinement, and the intelligence of this people. Your fine settlements, unsurpassed in loveliness and beauty, your public buildings, your machinery, and the union and good feeling pervading throughout your Territory, are all monuments of the wisdom and power that influence and control every department. No stranger coming into this Territory but will be struck at the luxury, magnificence, symmetry, and ingenuity that exists throughout this Valley.

"I was one of the Judges of the Supreme Court in Iowa for seven years; my salary was \$1,000 per year; the salary of Chief Justice in Utah was then \$1,800. I had a delightful home in Iowa, as many of you have here. My appointment to Utah was soon rumored, and my friends, the members of the bar, reasoned with me on the propriety of leaving Iowa; my post was flooded with letters from my friends on the subject; my old friends in New York, with whom I studied law for years, informed me that I could not live here and discharge the official duties assigned me. If I examine my own feelings in relation to coming to this place, I was actuated by one feeling, which was to show to the world the slanders that had been heaped upon the people, than by any other motives. It could not be for wealth or honor. I have a wife and five children, one daughter grown to womanhood; and I can say there is *less immorality, less drunkenness, and less licentiousness here, than anywhere I have ever been.* I turned my back on the advice of my friends; I have never regretted the step I took. They tried to stay my family, but I controlled them enough; I left it to their choice to come or stay. If you call this a compliment to your Territory, you are welcome to it, and I am proud of it."

In addition to these we might refer to the remarks made by Judge Lazarus Reid, (now dead,) of New York, Judge Leo. Shaver, and hundreds of disinterested witnesses, who have resided in Utah, and are acquainted with the state of affairs in that Territory; but space will not admit of introducing one tithe of their testimony.

We think that at least common honesty demands that journalists should turn the attention of their leisure moments to the correction of

morals and good breeding, in communities they are so well acquainted with, and leave those they know so little about, until they are better informed, or more disposed to do them justice.

## EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION.

Philip. Landgrave of Hesse, one of the principal Lords and princes of Germany, wrote to the great Reformer, Martin Luther, and to the principal heads of the Protestant Reformation, desiring the privilege of a second wife. Many arguments were urged by Philip, showing that the practice was in accordance with the Bible, and not prohibited under the Christian dispensation. Luther met in Council with the principal Divines to consult upon the propriety of granting the request of the Landgrave. After a thorough investigation of the subject they granted his request in a lengthy letter from which the following is an extract. The letter commences as follows:

"To the most Serene Prince and Lord Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, Zenlembogon, of Diets of Ziegenhain and Nedda, our gracious Lord, we wish above all things the grace of God through Christ Jesus."

"1st. We have been informed by Bucer, and in the instruction your Highness gave him, have read the trouble of mind and uneasiness of conscience your Highness is under at this present; and although it seemed to us very difficult so speedily to answer the doubts proposed; nevertheless we should not permit the said Bucer, who was urgent for his return to your Highness, to go away without an answer in writing.

2d. If your Highness is resolved to marry a second wife, we judge it ought to be done secretly, that is that none but the person you shall wed, and a few trusty persons, know of the matter, and they, too, under the seal of confession. Hence no contradiction nor scandal of moment need be apprehended; for it is no extraordinary thing for princes to keep concubines; and though the vulgar should

be scandalised thereat, the more intelligent would doubt of the truth, and prudent persons would approve of this moderate kind of life, preferable to adultery and other brutal actions. There is no need of being concerned for what men say provided all goes right with conscience. So far do we *approve* of it, and in those circumstances only by us specified, for the gospel hath neither recalled nor *forbid* what was permitted in the law of Moses with respect to marriage

"Your Highness hath, therefore, in this writing not only the *approbation* of us all, in case of necessity, concerning what you desire, but also the reflections we have made thereupon. We beseech you to weigh them as becometh a wise, virtuous, and Christian Prince. We also beg of God to direct all for his glory and your Highness salvation. May God preserve your Highness. We are most ready to serve your Highness.

"Given at Wittemberg, the Wednesday after the fast of Saint Nicholas, 1539.

"Your Highness's most humble and most obedient subjects,

Martin Luther  
Philip Melancthon  
Martin Bucer  
Antony Corvin  
Adam  
John Levengue  
Justus Wartfute  
Dennis Melanther"

This letter was in Melancthon's own hand-writing, attested by George Nuspicher, Notary Imperial, and has been taken from the 1st vol. of a work entitled "History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches" by James Benign Bossuet.

The marriage contract of Philip with Margaret de Saal his second wife, was attested by Belthasar Rand, of Feeld, Notary Public Imperial.

EXTRACT FROM THE "LATTER DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR."—No. 30, VOL. XVI. DATED 29TH JULY, 1854.

DEFENCE OF POLYGAMY.

BY A LADY OF UTAH, IN A LETTER TO HER SISTER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Great Salt Lake City, Jan. 12, 1854.

Dear Sister.—Your letter of Oct. 2, was received on yesterday. My joy on its reception was more than I can express. I had waited so long for your answer to our last, that I had almost concluded my friends were offended, and would write to me no more. Judge, then, of my joy when I read the sentiments of friendship and of sisterly affection expressed in your letter.

We are all well here, and are prosperous and happy in our family circle. My children, four in number, are healthy and cheerful, and fast expanding their physical and intellectual faculties. Health, peace, and prosperity have attended us all the day long.

It seems, my dear sister, that we are no nearer together in our religious views than formerly. Why is this? Are we not all bound to leave

this world, with all we possess therein, and reap the reward of our doings *here* in a never ending hereafter? If so, do we not desire to be undeceived and to *know and to do the truth*? Do we not all wish in our very hearts to be sincere with ourselves, and to be honest and frank with each other.

If so, you will bear with me patiently, while I give a few of my reasons for embracing, and holding sacred, that particular point in the doctrine of the Church of the Saints, to which you, my dear sister, together with a large majority of Christendom, so decidedly object. I mean, a "*plurality of wives.*"

I have a Bible, which I have been taught, from my infancy, to hold sacred. In this Bible, I read of a holy man named Abraham, who is represented as the friend of God, a faithful man in all things, a man who

kept the commandments of God, and who is called, in the New Testament, the "father of the faithful." See. James ii. 23. Rom. iv. 16. Gal. iii. 8, 9, 16, 29.

I find this man had a plurality of wives, some of which were called concubines. See Book of Genesis; and for his concubines, see xxv. 6.

I also find his grandson Jacob possessed of four wives, twelve sons, and a daughter. These wives are spoken very highly of by the sacred writers, as honourable and virtuous women. "These," say the Scriptures, "did build the House of Israel."

Jacob himself was also a man of God, and the Lord blessed him and his house, and commanded him to be fruitful and multiply. See Gen. xxx. to xxxv. and particularly xxxv. 10, 11.

I find also that the twelve sons of Jacob, by these four wives, became princes, heads of tribes, Patriarchs, whose names are had in everlasting remembrance to all generations.

Now God talked with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob frequently; and His angels also visited and talked with them, and blessed them and their wives and children. He also reproved the sins of some of the sons of Jacob, for hating and selling their brother, and for adultery. But in all His communications with them, He never condemned their family organization; but on the contrary, always approved of it, and blessed them in this respect. He even told Abraham, that He would make him the father of many nations, and that in him and his seed all the nations and kindreds of the earth should be blessed. See Genesis xviii. 17—19; also xii. 1—3. In later years I find the plurality of wives perpetuated, sanctioned, and provided for, in the law of Moses.

David the Psalmist not only had a plurality of wives, but the Lord Himself spoke by the mouth of Nathan the Prophet, and told David, that He (the Lord) had given his master's wives into his bosom; but because he had committed adultery with the wife of Uriah, and had caused his murder, He would take his wives and give them to a neighbour of his, &c. See 2 Samuel, xii. 7—11.

Here, then, we have the word of the Lord, not only sanctioning polygamy, but actually giving to king David the wives of his master, (Saul) and afterward taking the wives of David from him, and giving them to another man. Here we have a sample of severe reproof and punishment for adultery and murder: while polygamy is authorized and approved by the word of God.

But to come to the New Testament. I find Jesus Christ speaks very highly of Abraham and his family: he says, "Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." Luke, xiii. 28, 29.

Again, he said, "If ye were Abraham's seed, ye would do the works of Abraham."

Paul the Apostle, wrote to the Saints of his day, and informed them as follows: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ; and if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

He also sets forth Abraham and Sarah as patterns of faith and good works, and as the father and mother of faithful Christians, who should, by faith and good works, aspire to be counted the sons of Abraham, and daughters of Sarah.

Now let us look at some of the works of Sarah, for which she is so highly commended by the Apostles, and by them held up as a pattern for Christian ladies to imitate. "Now Sarah, Abram's wife, bare him no children; and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarah said unto Abram, behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarah. And Sarah, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband, Abram, to be his wife," See Genesis, xvi. 1—3.

According to Jesus Christ and the



Apostles, then, the only way to be saved is to be adopted into the great family of polygamists, by the Gospel, and then strictly follow their examples.

Again, John the Revelator describes the Holy City of the heavenly Jerusalem, with the names of the twelve sons of Jacob inscribed on the gates. Rev xxi. 12.

To sum up the whole, then, I find that polygamists were the friends of God; that the family and lineage of a polygamist were selected, in which all nations should be blessed; that a polygamist is named in the New Testament as the father of the faithful Christians of after ages, and cited as a pattern for all generations; that the wife of a polygamist, who encouraged her husband in the practice of the same, and even urged him into it, and officiated in giving him another wife, is named as an honorable and virtuous woman, a pattern for Christian ladies, and the very mother of all holy women in the Christian Church, whose aspiration it should be, to be called her daughters; that Jesus Christ has declared, that the great fathers of the polygamic family stand at the head in the kingdom of God: in short, that all the saved of after generations should be saved by becoming members of a polygamic family; that all those who do not become members of it are strangers and aliens to the covenant of promise, the commonwealth of Israel, and not heirs according to the promise made to Abraham; that all people from the east, west, north, or south, who enter into the kingdom, enter into the society of polygamists, and under their patriarchal rule and government; indeed no one can even approach the gates of heaven without beholding the names of twelve polygamists, (the sons of four different women by one man,) engraven in everlasting glory upon the pearly gates.

My dear sister, with the Scriptures before me, I could never find it in my heart to reject the heavenly vision which has restored to man the fulness of the Gospel, or the Latter-day Prophets and Apostles, merely because in this restoration is included

the ancient law of matrimony and of family organization and government, preparatory to the restoration of all Israel.

But, leaving all Scripture, history, or precedent, out of the question, let us come to nature's law. What then, appears to be the great object of the marriage relation? I answer—the multiplying of our species, the rearing and training of children.

To accomplish this object, natural law would dictate, that a husband should remain apart from his wife at certain seasons, which, in the very constitution of the female, are untimely. Or in other words, indulgence should not be merely for pleasure or wanton desires, but mainly for the purpose of procreation.

The mortality of nature would teach a mother, that during nature's process in the formation and growth of embryo man, her heart should be pure, her thoughts and affections chaste, her mind calm, her passions without excitement; while her body should be invigorated with every exercise conducive to health and vigour; but by no means subjected to anything calculated to disturb, irritate, weary, or exhaust any of its functions.

And while a kind husband should nourish, sustain, and comfort the wife of his bosom, by every kindness and attention consistent with her situation, and with his most tender affection; still he should refrain from all those untimely associations which are forbidden in the great constitutional laws of female nature; which laws we see carried out in almost the entire animal economy, human animals excepted.

Polygamy, then, as practised under the Patriarchal law of God, tends directly to the chastity of women, and to sound health and morals in the constitutions of their offspring.

You can read, in the law of God, in your Bible, the times and circumstances under which a woman should remain apart from her husband, during which times she is considered unclean; and should her husband come to her bed under such circumstances, he would commit a gross sin both

against the laws of nature, and the wise provisions of God's law, as revealed in His word; in short, he would commit an abomination; he would sin both against his own body, against the body of his wife, and against the laws of procreation, in which the health and morals of his offspring are directly concerned.

The polygamic law of God opens to all vigorous, healthy, and virtuous females, a door by which they may become honourable wives of virtuous men, and mothers of faithful, virtuous, healthy, and vigorous children.

And here let me ask you, my dear sister, what female in all New Hampshire would marry a drunkard, a man of hereditary disease, a debauchee, an idler, or a spendthrift; or what woman would become a prostitute; or on the other hand, live and die single; or without forming those inexpressibly dear relationships of wife and mother; if the Abrahamic covenant, or Patriarchal laws of God, were extended over your State, and held sacred and honourable by all?

Dear sister, in your thoughtlessness, you inquire, "Why not a plurality of husbands as well as a plurality of wives?" To which I reply: 1st, God has never commanded or sanctioned a plurality of husbands; 2nd, "*Man is the head of the woman.*" and no woman can serve two lords; 3rd, Such an order of things would work death and not life, or, in plain language, it would multiply disease instead of children. In fact, the experiment of a plurality of husbands, or rather of one woman for many men, is in active operation, and has been for centuries in all the principal towns and cities of "*Christendom!*" It is the genius of "*Christian Institutions,*" falsely so called. It is the result of "*Mystery Babylon, the great whore of all the earth.*" Or in other words, it is the result of making void the holy ordinances of God in relation to matrimony, and introducing the laws of Rome, in which the clergy and nuns are forbidden to marry, and other members only permitted to have one wife." This law leaves females exposed to a life of single "*blessedness,*" without husband, child, or friend to

provide for or comfort them; or to a life of poverty and loneliness, exposed to temptation, to perverted affections, to unlawful means to gratify them, or to the necessity of selling themselves for lucre. While the man who has abundance of means is tempted to spend it on a mistress in secret, and in a lawless way, the law of God would have given her to him as an honorable wife. These circumstances give rise to murder, infanticide, suicide, disease, remorse, despair, wretchedness, poverty, untimely death, with all the attendant train of jealousies, heartrending miseries, want of confidence in families, contaminating disease, &c.; and finally, to the horrible license system, in which governments, called Christian, license their fair daughters, I will not say to play the beast, but to a degradation far beneath them; for every species of the animal creation, except man, refrain from such abominable excesses, and observe in a great measure the laws of nature in procreation.

I again repeat, that nature has constituted the female differently from the male; and for a different purpose. The strength of the female constitution is designed to flow in a stream of *life*, to nourish and sustain the embryo, to bring it forth, and to nurse it on her bosom. When nature is not in operation within her in these particulars, and for these heavenly ends, it has wisely provided relief at regular periods, in order that her system may be kept pure and healthy, without exhausting the fountain of life on the one hand, or drying up its river of life on the other; till mature age, and an approaching change of worlds, render it necessary for her to cease to be fruitful, and give her to rest awhile, and enjoy a tranquil life in the midst of that family circle, endeared to her by so many ties, and which may be supposed, at this period of her life, to be approaching the vigor of manhood, and therefore able to comfort and sustain her.

Not so with man. He has no such drawback upon his strength. It is his to move in a wider sphere. If God shall count him worthy of an

hundred fold, in this life, of wives and children, and houses, and lands, and kindreds, he may even aspire to Patriarchal sovereignty, to empire; to be the prince or head of a tribe, or tribes; and like Abraham of old, be able to send forth, for the defence of his country, hundreds and thousands of his own warriors, born in his own house.

A noble man of God, who is full of the Spirit of the Most High, and is counted worthy to converse with Jehovah, or with the son of God; and to associate with angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; one who will teach his children, and bring them up in the light of unadulterated and eternal truth; is more worthy of a hundred wives and children, than the ignorant slave of passion, or of vice and folly, is to have one wife and one child. Indeed the God of Abraham is so much better pleased with one than with the other, that he would even take away the one talent, which is habitually abused, neglected, or put to an improper use, and give it to him who has ten talents.

In the Patriarchal order of family government, the wife is bound to the law of her husband. She honors, "*calls him lord,*" even as Sarah obeyed and honored Abraham. She lives for him, and to increase his glory, his greatness, his kingdom, or family. Her affections are centered in her God, her husband, and her children.

The children are also under his government, worlds without end. "*While life or thought, or being lasts, or immortality endures,*" they are bound to obey him as their father and king.

He also has a head, to whom he is responsible. He must keep the commandments of God, and observe His laws. He must not take a wife unless she is given to him by the law and authority of God. He must not commit adultery, nor take liberties with any women except his own, who are secured to him by the holy ordinances of matrimony.

Hence a nation organized under the law of the Gospel, or in other words, the law of Abraham and the Patriarchs, would have no institu-

tions tending to licentiousness; no adulteries, fornications &c., would be tolerated. No houses or institutions would exist for traffic in shame or in the life blood of our fair daughters. Wealthy men would have no inducement to keep a mistress in secret, or unlawfully. Females would have no grounds for temptation in any such lawless life. Neither money nor pleasure could tempt them, nor poverty drive them to any such excess; because the door would be open for every virtuous female to form the honorable and endearing relationships of wife and mother, in some virtuous family, where love, and peace, and plenty, would crown her days, and truth and the practice of virtue qualify her to be transplanted with her family circle in that eternal soil, where they might multiply their children, without pain, or sorrow, or death; and go on increasing in numbers, in wealth, in greatness, in glory, might, majesty, power, and dominion, in worlds without end.

O my dear sister! could the dark veil of tradition be rent from your mind! could you gaze for a moment on the resurrection of the just! could you behold Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives and children, clad in the bloom, freshness, and beauty of immortal *flesh and bones*; clothed in robes of fine, white linen, bedecked with precious stones and gold; and surrounded with an offspring of immortals as countless as the stars of the firmament, or as the grains of sand upon the sea shore; over which they reign as kings and queens for ever and ever! you would then know something of the weight of those words of the sacred writer which are recorded in relation to the four wives of Jacob, the mothers of the twelve Patriarchs, namely: "*These did build the house of Israel.*"

O that my dear kindred could but realize that they have need to repent of the sins, ignorance, and traditions of those perverted systems which are misnamed "*Christianity,*" and be baptized—*buried* in the water, in the likeness of the death and burial of Jesus Christ, and rise to newness of life in the likeness of his resurrec-

tion; receive his spirit by the laying on of the hands of an Apostle, according to promise, and forsake the world and the pride thereof. Thus they would be adopted into the family of Abraham, become his sons and daughters, see and enjoy for themselves the visions of the spirit of eternal truth, which bear witness of the family order of heaven, and the beauties and glories of eternal kindred ties; for my pen can never describe them.

Dear, dear kindred: remember, according to the New Testament, and the testimony of an ancient Apostle, if you are ever saved in the kingdom of God, it must be by being adopted into the family of polygamists—the family of the great Patriarch Abraham: for in his seed, or family, and not out of it, “*shall all the nations and kindreds of the earth be blessed.*”

You say you believe polygamy is “*licentiousness*,” that it is “*abominable*,” “*bestly*, &c; “the practice only of the most barbarous nations, or of the dark ages, or some great or good men who were left to commit gross sins.” Yet you say you are anxious for me to be converted to your faith; and that we may see each other in this life, and be associated in one great family in that life which has no end.

Now in order to comply with your wishes, I must renounce the Old and New Testaments; must count Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their families, as licentious, wicked, bestly, abominable characters; Moses, Nathan, David, and the Prophets, no better. I must look upon the God of Israel as partaker in all these abominations, by holding them in fellowship; and even as a minister of such iniquity, by giving king Saul's wives into king David's bosom; and afterwards by taking David's wives from him, and giving them to his neighbour. I must consider Jesus Christ, and Paul, and John, as either living in a dark age, as full of the darkness and ignorance of barbarous climes, or else wilfully abominable and wicked, in fellowshipping polygamists, and representing them as fathers of the

faithful, and rulers in heaven. I must doom them all to hell, with adulterers, fornicators, &c, or else, at least, assign to them some nook or corner in heaven, as ignorant persons who, knowing but little, were beaten with few stripes. While by analogy, I must learn to consider the Roman Popes, clergy, and nuns, who do not marry at all, as foremost in the ranks of glory; and those Catholics and Protestants who have but one wife, as next in order of salvation, glory, immortality, and eternal life.

Now, dear friends, much as I long to see you, and dear as you are to me I can never come to these terms. I feel as though the gospel had introduced me into the right family, into the right lineage, and into good company. And besides all these considerations, should I ever become so beclouded with unbelief of the Scriptures and heavenly institutions, as to agree with my kindred in New Hampshire, in *theory*, still my practical circumstances are different, and would I fear continue to separate us by a wide and also impassable gulf.

For instance, I have, (as you see, in all, good conscience, founded on the word of God.) formed family and kindred ties, which are inexpressibly dear to me, and which I can never bring my feelings to consent to dissolve. I have a good and virtuous husband whom I love. We have four little children which are mutually and inexpressibly dear to us. An besides this, my husband has seven other living wives, and one who has departed to a better world. He has in all upwards of twenty-five children. All these mothers and children are endeared to me by kindred ties, by mutual affection, by acquaintance and association; and the mothers in particular, by mutual and long continued exercises of toil, patience, long-suffering, and sisterly kindness. We all have our imperfections in this life; but I know that these are good and worthy women, and that my husband is a good and worthy man: one who keeps the commandments of Jesus Christ, and presides in his family like an Abraham. He seeks to provide for them with all diligence:

he loves them all, and seeks to comfort them and make them happy. He teaches them the commandments of Jesus Christ, and gathers them about him in the family circle to call upon his God, both morning and evening. He and his family have the confidence, esteem, good-will, and fellowship of this entire territory, and of a wide circle of acquaintances in Europe and America. He is a practical teacher of morals and religion, a promoter of general education, and at present occupies an honourable seat in the Legislative Council of this territory.

Now, as to visiting my kindred in New Hampshire, I would be pleased to do so, were it the will of God. But first, the laws of that state must be so modified by enlightened legislation, and the customs and consciences of its inhabitants, and of my kindred, so altered, that my husband can accompany me with all his wives and children, and be as much respected and honoured in his family organization, and in his holy calling, as he is at home; or in the same manner as the Patriarch Jacob would have been respected, had he, with his wives and children, paid a visit to his kindred. As my husband is yet in his youth, as well as myself, I fondly hope we shall live to see that day. For already the star of Jacob is in the ascendancy; the house of Israel is about to be restored: while "*Mystery Babylon*," with all her institutions, awaits her own overthrow. Till this is the case in New Hampshire, my kindred will be under the necessity of coming here to see us, or on the other hand we will be mutually compelled to forego the pleasure of each other's company.

You mention, in your letter, that Paul, the Apostle, recommended that Bishops be the husband of one wife. Why this was the case, I do not know, unless it was as he says that, while he was among Romans he did as Romans did. Rome, at that time, governed the world, as it were; and although gross idolaters, they held to the one wife system. Under these circumstances, no doubt, the Apostle Paul, seeing a great many polyga-

mists in the Church, recommended that they had better choose for this particular temporal office, men of small families, who would not be in disrepute with the government. This is precisely our course in those countries where Roman institutions still bear sway. Our Elders there have but one wife, in order to conform to the laws of men.

You inquire why Elder W., when at your house, denied that the Church of this age held to the doctrine of plurality. I answer, that he might have been ignorant of the fact, as our belief on this point was not published till 1852. And had he known it, he had no right to reveal the same until the full time had arrived. God kindly withheld this doctrine for a time, because of the ignorance and prejudice of the nations of mystic Babylon, that peradventure he might save some of them.

Now, dear sister, I must close. I wish all my kindred and old acquaintances to see this letter, or a copy thereof; and that they will consider it as if written to themselves. I love them dearly, and greatly desire and pray for their salvation, and that we may all meet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.

Dear sister, do not let your prejudices and traditions keep you from believing the Bible; nor the pride, shame, or love of the world keep you from your seat in the kingdom of heaven, among the royal family of polygamists. Write often and freely.

With sentiments of the deepest affection and kindred feeling, I remain dear sister, your affectionate sister,

BELINDA MARDEN PRATT.

Mrs. Lydia Kimball, Nashua, H. N.

### MILTON ON POLYGAMY.

From the First Book on "Christian Doctrine," Translated from the Latin, by Charles R. Sumner, D. D., Lord Bishop of Winchester.

In the definition which I have given [of marriage] I have not said, in compliance with the common opinion, *of one man with one woman*, lest I should by implication charge the holy

patriarchs and pillars of our faith, Abraham, and the others who had more than one wife at the same time, with habitual fornication and adultery; and lest I should be forced to exclude from the sanctuary of God as spurious, the holy offspring which sprang from them, yea, the whole of the sons of Israel, for whom the sanctuary itself was made. For it is said, Deut. xxiii, 2, "a bastard shall not enter into the congregation of Jehovah, even to his tenth generation." Either therefore polygamy is a true marriage, or all children born in that state are spurious; which would include the whole race of Jacob, the twelve holy tribes chosen by God.

But as such an assertion would be absurd in the extreme, not to say impious, and as it is the height of injustice, as well as an example of most dangerous tendency in religion, to account as sin what is not such in reality; it appears to me that, so far from the question respecting the lawfulness of polygamy being trivial, it is of the highest importance that it should be decided.

Those who deny its lawfulness, attempt to prove their position from Gen. ii, 24, "a man shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh, compared with Matt. xix, 5, "they twain shall be one flesh." A man shall cleave, they say, to his wife, not to his wives, and they twain, and no more, shall be one flesh. This is certainly ingenious; and I therefore subjoin the passage in Exod, xx, 17, "thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his man-servant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass;" whence it would follow that no one had more than a single house, a single man-servant, a single maid-servant, a single ox or ass. It would be ridiculous to argue, that it is not said houses, but house; not man-servants, but man-servant; not even neighbors, but neighbor: as if it were not the general custom, in laying down commandments of this kind, to use the singular number, not in a numerical sense, but as designating the species of the thing intended.

With regard to the phrase, they twain, and not more, shall be one flesh, it is to be observed, first, that the context refers to the husband and that wife only whom he was seeking to divorce, without intending any allusion to the number of his wives, whether one or more. Secondly, marriage is in the nature of a relation: and to one relation there can be no more than two parties. In the same sense therefore as if a man has many sons his parental relation towards them all is manifold, but towards each individually is single and complete in itself; by parity of reasoning, if a man has many wives, the relation which he bears to each will not be less perfect in itself, nor will the husband be less one flesh with each of them, than if he had only one wife. Thus it might be properly said of Abraham, with regard to Sarah and Hagar respectively, these twain were one flesh. And with good reason; for whoever consorts with harlots, however many in number, is still said to be one flesh with each: 1 Cor. vi, 16, "what, know ye not, that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh." The expression may therefore be applied as properly to the husband who has many wives, as to him who has only one.

Hence it follows that the commandment in question (tho' in fact it is no commandment at all, as has been shown) contains nothing against polygamy, either in the way of direct prohibition or implied censure;—unless we are to suppose that the law of God as delivered to Moses, was at variance with his prior declarations; or that, tho' the passage in question had been frequently looked into by a multitude of Priests, and Levites, and Prophets, men of all ranks of holiest lives and most acceptable to God, the fury of their passions was such as to hurry them by a blind impulse into habitual fornication; for to this supposition are we reduced, if there be anything in the present precept which renders polygamy incompatible with lawful marriage.

Another text from which the unlawfulness of polygamy is maintain-

ed, is Lev. xviii, 18, "neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time." Here Junius translates the passage, *mulierem unam ad alteram*, [one woman to another] instead of *mulierem ad sororem suam*, [a woman to her sister] in order that from this forced and inadmissible interpretation, he may elicit an argument against polygamy.

In drawing up a law, as in composing a definition, it is necessary that the most exact and appropriate words should be used, and that they should be interpreted not in their metaphorical, but in their proper signification. He says, indeed, that the same words are found in the same sense in other passages. This is true; but it is only where the context precludes the possibility of any ambiguity, as in Gen. xxvi, 31, *jura-verunt vir fratri suo*, that is *alteri*, they swore one to another. No one would infer from this passage, that Isaac was the brother of Abimelech; nor would any one, on the other hand, entertain a doubt that the passage in Leviticus was intended as a prohibition against taking a wife to her sister; particularly as the preceding verses of this chapter treat of the degrees of affinity to which intermarriage is forbidden. Moreover, this would be to uncover her nakedness, the evil against which the law in question was intended to guard; whereas the caution would be unnecessary in the case of taking another wife not related or allied to the former; for no nakedness would be thereby uncovered. Lastly, why is the clause *in her lifetime* added? For there could be no doubt of its being lawful after her death to marry another who was neither related nor allied to her, though it might be questionable whether it were lawful to marry a wife's sister.

It is objected, that marriage with a wife's sister is forbidden by analogy in the sixteenth verse, and that therefore a second prohibition was unnecessary. I answer, first, that there is in reality no analogy between the two passages; for that by marrying

a brother's wife, the brother's nakedness is uncovered; whereas by marrying a wife's sister, it is not a sister's nakedness, but only that of a kinswoman by marriage, which is uncovered. Besides, if nothing were to be prohibited which had been before prohibited by analogy, why is marriage with a mother forbidden, when marriage with a father had been already declared unlawful? or why marriage with a mother's sister, when marriage with a father's sister had been prohibited?

If this reasoning be allowed it follows that more than half the laws relating to incest are unnecessary. Lastly, considering that the prevention of enmity is alleged as a principal motive for the law before us, it is obvious that if the intention had been to condemn polygamy, reasons of a much stronger kind might have been urged from the nature of the original institution, as was done in the ordinance of the Sabbath.

A third passage which is advanced, Deut. xvii. 17, is so far from condemning polygamy, either in a king, or in any one else, that it expressly allows it; and only imposes the same restraints upon this condition which are laid upon the multiplication of horses, or the accumulation of treasure, as will appear from the seventeenth and eighteenth verses.

Except the three passages which are thus irrelevantly adduced, not a trace appears of the interdiction of polygamy throughout the whole law; nor even in any of the prophets, who were at once the rigid interpreters of the law, and the habitual reprovers of the vices of the people. The only shadow of an exception occurs in a passage of Malachi, the last of the prophets, which some consider as decisive against polygamy. It would be indeed a late and postliminous enactment, if that were for the first time prohibited after the Babylonish captivity, which ought to have been prohibited many ages before. For if it had been really a sin, how could it have escaped the reprehension of so many prophets who preceded him? We may safely conclude that if polygamy be not forbidden in the law,

neither is it forbidden here: for Malachi was not the author of a new law.

Let us however, see the words themselves as translated by Junius, ii. 15, *nonne unum effecit? quamvis reliqui spiritus ipsi essent: quid autem unum?* [Malachi, chap. II, v. 15, three first lines.] It would be rash and unreasonable indeed, if on the authority of so obscure a passage, which has been tortured and twisted by different interpreters into such a variety of meanings, we were to form a conclusion on so momentous a subject, and to impose it upon others as an article of faith.

But whatever be the signification of the words, *nonne unum effecit*, what do they prove? Are we, for the sake of drawing an inference against polygamy, to understand the phrase thus—did he not make one woman? But the gender, and even the case, are at variance with this interpretation; for nearly all the other commentators render the words as follows:—*annon unus fecit?—et residuum spiritus ipsi? et quid ille unus?* We ought not therefore to draw any conclusion from a passage like the present in behalf of a doctrine which is either not mentioned elsewhere, or only in doubtful terms; but rather conclude that the prophet's design was to reprove a practice that the whole of Scripture concurs in reprovng, and which forms the principal subject of the very chapter in question, ii. 11-16 namely, marriage with the daughter of a strange god—a corruption very prevalent among the Jews of that time, as we learn from Ezra and Nehemiah.

With regard to the words of Christ, Matt. v. 32, and xix. 5. the passage from Gen. ii, 24, is repeated, not for the purpose of condemning polygamy, but of reprovng the unrestrained liberty of divorce, which is a very different thing: nor can the words be made to apply to any other subject without evident violence to their meaning. For the argument which is deduced from Matt. v, 32, that if a man who marries another after putting away his first wife, committeth adultery, much more must he commit

adultery who retains the first and marries another, ought itself to be repudiated as an illegitimate conclusion. For in the first place, it is the divine precepts themselves that are obligatory, not the consequences deduced from them by human reasoning; for what appears a reasonable inference to one individual, may not be equally obvious to another of not inferior discernment.

Secondly, he who puts away his wife, and marries another, is not said to commit adultery because he marries another, but because in consequence of his marriage with another he does not retain his former wife, to whom also he owed the performance of conjugal duties: whence it is expressly said, Mark x. 11, "he committeth adultery against her." That he is in a condition to perform conjugal duties to the one after having taken another to her, is shewn by God himself, Exod. xxi. 10, "if he take him another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish." It cannot be supposed that the divine forethought intended to provide for adultery.

Nor is it allowable to argue, from 1 Cor. vii. 2, 'let every man have his own wife,' that therefore none should have more than one: for the meaning of the precept is, that every man should have his own wife to himself—not that he should have but one wife. That bishops and elders should have no more than one wife, is explicitly enjoined, 1 Tim. iii. 2, and Tit. i 6, "he must be the husband of one wife:" in order probably, that they may discharge with greater diligence the ecclesiastical duties which they have undertaken. The command itself, however, is a sufficient proof that polygamy was not forbidden to the rest, and that it was common in the church at that time.

[ "He must be the husband of one wife," does not in the least imply that he was not at liberty to have more wives.—ED.]

Lastly, in answer to what is urged from 1 Cor. vii, 4, "likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife, it is easy to reply, as was done above, that the word *wife*



in this passage is used with reference to the species, and not to the number. Nor can the power of the wife over the body of her husband be different now, from what it was under the law, Exod. xxi, which signifies "her stated times," expressed by St. Paul in the present chapter by the phrase, "her due benevolence." With regard to what is *due*, the Hebrew word is sufficiently explicit.

On the other hand, the following passages clearly admit the lawfulness of polygamy, Exod. xxi, 10, "if he take him another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish." Deut. xvii, 17, "neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away." Would the law have been so closely worded, if it had not been allowable to take more wives than one at the same time? Who would venture to subjoin as an inference from this language, therefore let him have one only? In such case, since it is said in the preceding verse, "he shall not multiply horses to himself," it would be necessary to subjoin there also, therefore he shall have one horse only.

Nor do we want any proof to assure us, that the first institution of marriage was intended to bind the prince equally with the people: if therefore it permits only one wife, it permits no more even to the prince. But the reason given for the law is this, that his heart turn not away; a danger which would arise if he were to marry many, especially strange women, as Solomon afterwards did. Now if the present law had been intended merely as a confirmation and vindication of the primary institution of marriage, nothing could have been more appropriate than to have recited the institution itself in this place, and not to have advanced that reason alone which has been mentioned.

Let us hear the words of God himself, the author of the law, and the best interpreter of his own will, 2 Sam. xii. 8 "I gave thee thy master's wives into thy bosom... and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things." Here there can be no subterfuge; God

gave him wives; he gave them to the man whom he loved, as one among a number of great benefits; he would have given him more, if these had not been enough. Besides, the very argument which God uses towards David, is of more force when applied to the gift of wives, than to any other,—thou oughtest at least to have abstained from the wife of another person, not so much because I had given thee thy master's house, or thy master's kingdom, as because I had given thee the wives of the King.

Beza indeed objects, that David herein committed incest, namely, with the wives of his father-in-law. But he had forgotten what is indicated by Esther ii, 12, 13, that the kings of Israel had two houses for the women, one appointed for the virgins, the other for the concubines, and that it was the former and not the latter which were given to David. This appears also from 1 Kings i, 4, "the king knew her not." Cantic. vi, 8, "there are fourscore concubines, and virgins without number." At the same time, it might be said with perfect propriety that God had given him his master's wives, even supposing that he had only given him as many in number and of the same description, tho' not the very same; even as he gave him, not indeed the identical house and retinue of his master, but one equally magnificent and royal.

It is not wonderful, therefore, that what the authority of the law, and the voice of God himself has sanctioned, should be alluded to by the holy prophets in their inspired hymns as a thing lawful and honorable.—Psal. xlv, 9, (which is entitled, a song of loves) "kings' daughters were among thy honorable women." v. 14, "the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee." Nay, the words of this very song are quoted by the Apostle to the Hebrews, i. 8, "unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God." &c., as the words wherein God the Father himself addresses the Son, and in which his divinity is asserted more clearly than in any other passage. Would it have been proper for God the Father to

speak by the mouth of harlots, and to manifest his holy Son to mankind as God in the amatory songs of adulteresses? \* \* \*

Nor must we omit 2 Chron. xxiv, 2, 3,—"Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest; and Jehoiada took for him two wives." For the two clauses are not placed in contrast, or disjoined from each other, but it is said in one and the same connection that under the guidance of Jehoiada he did that which was right, and that by the authority of the same individual he married two wives. This is contrary to the usual practice in the eulogies of the kings, where, if anything blameable be subjoined, it is expressly excepted from the present character: 1 Kings, xv. 5, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." V. 11, 14, and Asa did that which was right.....but the high places were not removed; nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect."

Since therefore, the right conduct of Joash is mentioned in unqualified terms, in conjunction with his double marriage, it is evident that the latter was not considered matter of censure; for the sacred historian would not have neglected so suitable an opportunity of making the customary exception, if there had really been any thing which deserved disapprobation.

Moreover, God himself, in an allegorical fiction, Ezek. xxiii, 4, represents himself as having espoused two wives, Aholah and Aholibah, a mode of speaking which he would by no means have employed, especially at such length, even in a parable, nor indeed, have taken on himself such a character at all, if the practice which it implied had been intrinsically dishonorable or shameful.

On what grounds, however, can a practice be considered dishonorable or shameful, which is prohibited to no one even under the gospel? for that dispensation annuls none of the merely civil regulations which existed previous to its introduction. It is only enjoined that elders and deacons should be chosen from such as were husbands of one wife, 1 Tim. iii. 2, and Tit. i, 6. This implies, not that

to be the husband of more than one wife would be a sin, for then the restriction would have been equally imposed on all; but that, in proportion as they were less entangled in domestic affairs, they would be more at leisure for the business of the church. \* \* \*

[It implies they *must* have at least one.—Ed.]

Lastly, I argue as follows from Heb. xiii, 4. Polygamy is either marriage, or fornication, or adultery; the Apostle recognizes no fourth state. Reverence for so many patriarchs who were polygamists will, I trust, deter any one from considering it as fornication or adultery; for "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;" whereas the patriarchs were the objects of his special favor, as he himself testifies. If then, polygamy be marriage properly so called, it is also lawful and honorable, according to the same apostle: "marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled."

It appears to me sufficiently established by the above arguments, that polygamy is allowed by the law of God. Lest however any doubt should remain, I will subjoin abundant examples of men whose holiness renders them fit patterns for imitation, and who are among the lights of our faith.

Foremost I place Abraham, the father of all the faithful, and of the holy seed, Gen. xvi, 1, &c : Jacob, chap. xxx, and, if I mistake not, Moses, Numb. xii. 1, "for he had married [a Cushite, Marginal Translation, or] an Ethiopian woman." It is not likely that the wife of Moses, who had been so often spoken of before by her proper name of Zipporah, should now be called by the new title of the Cushite; or that the anger of Aaron and Miriam should at this time be suddenly kindled, because Moses forty years before had married Zipporah; nor would they have acted thus scornfully towards one whom the whole house of Israel had gone out to meet on her arrival with her father Jethro. If then he married the Cushite during the lifetime of Zipporah, his conduct in this particular received the express approbation of God him-

self, who moreover punished with severity the unnatural opposition of Aaron and his sister.

Next I place Gideon, that signal example of faith and piety, Judg. viii. 30 31, and Elkanah, a rigid Levite, the father of Samuel; who was so far from believing himself less acceptable to God on account of his double marriage, that he took with him his two wives every year to the sacrifices and annual worship, into the immediate presence of God. Nor was he therefore reproved, but went home blessed with Samuel, a child of excellent promise, 1 Sam. ii, 10.

Passing over several other examples, tho' illustrious, such as Caleb, 1 Chron. ii, 46, 48, vii, 1, 4: the sons of Issachar, in number "six and thirty thousand men, for they had many wives and sons." contrary to the modern European practice, where in many places the land is suffered to remain uncultivated for want of population: and also Manasseh, the son of Joseph, 1 Chron. vii, 14; I come to the prophet David, whom God loved beyond all men, and who took two wives, besides Michal; and this not in a time of pride and prosperity, but when he was almost bowed down by adversity, and when, as we learn from many of the Psalms, he was entirely occupied in the study of the word of God and in the regulation of his conduct, 1 Sam. xxv, 42, 43, and afterwards, 2 Sam. v, 12, 13, "David perceived that Jehovah had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake; and David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem."

Such were the motives, such the honorable and holy thoughts whereby

he was influenced, namely by the consideration of God's kindness towards him for his people's sake. His heavenly and prophetic understanding saw not in that primitive institution what we in our blindness fancy we discern so clearly: nor did he hesitate to proclaim in the supreme council of the nation the pure and honorable motives to which, as he trusted, his children born in polygamy owed their existence. 1 Chron. xxviii, 5, of all my sons, for Jehovah hath given me many sons, he hath chosen." &c.

I say nothing of Solomon, notwithstanding his wisdom, because he seems to have exceeded due bounds: altho' it is not objected to him that he had taken many wives, but that he had married strange women; 1 Kings, xi, 1, Nehe. xiii, 26. His son Rehoboam desired many wives, not in the time of his iniquity, but during the three years in which he is said to have walked in the way of David, 2 Chron. xi, 17, 21, 23.

Of Joash mention has already been made; who was induced to take two wives, not by licentious passion, or the wanton desire incident to uncontrolled power, but by the sanction and advice of a most wise and holy man, Jehoiada the priest.

Who can believe, either that so many men of the highest character, should have sinned thro' ignorance for so many ages; or that their hearts should have been so hardened; or that God should have tolerated such conduct in his people? Let therefore the rule received among theologians have the same weight here as in other cases:—"The practice of the saints is the best interpretation of the commandments."

