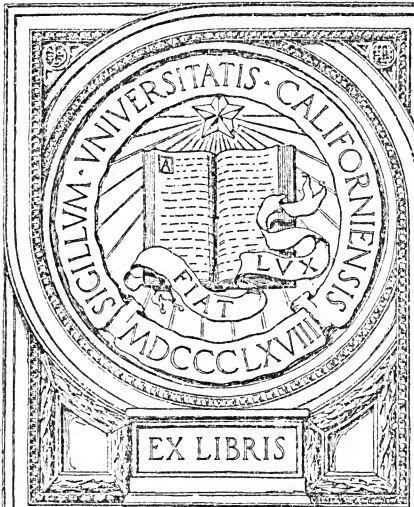


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A REPLY

TO A DEFENSE OF MORMONS AND TO AN ATTACK
UPON THE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION OF UTAH.

BY

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A REPLY TO A DEFENSE OF MORMONS AND TO AN ATTACK UPON THE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION OF UTAH.

Every cause has its Judases, who keep their intellects upon the bargain counter, and who, just in proportion as their price is low, seek to conceal their turpitude behind the vehemence and recklessness of their denunciation of persons whom they should help. We always hate those whom we have betrayed.

These thoughts are suggested by an article from Mr. V. S. Peet in the *Truth Seeker* for Nov. 25, 1905. The only motive for the article seems to be that the preachers, in the regular pursuit of their business, are interfering with the success of Mr. Peet, who wishes to sell Utah land. I have no financial interest in the business enterprise of either disputants, but have such knowledge as enables me to reach an opinion upon the relative veracity of Mr. Peet and the preachers whom he accuses. I will address myself to that question and that alone, omitting discussion of matters of inference.

Mr. Peet first complains that the ministerial association of Salt Lake City said that "the crime [polygamy] is spreading to adjacent states and territories." Also that the Rev. J. E. Wishard had said that "he had recently catalogued the names of thirty Mormons who had taken plural wives since September, 1890. This and similar statements are denounced as deliberate lies,

and then in a cheap stage bravado he adds: "I will say, if reasonable proof can be made to show that even one plural marriage has been performed or sanctioned by the Mormon Church since that time (September, 1890), I will pay \$1,000 for such information," etc., etc.

It is expected that those who are gullible because uninformed, will assume this to be proof that no new polygamous wives exist in Utah. I will presently show that this argument proves too much, because by the same evidence, I can prove that there never were a half dozen polygamists in Mormondom.

Let me ask how, in any gentile community, it is known that your neighbors are married? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, you never saw their marriage certificate, nor any one who was present at the semi-public ceremony. Yet you know, for all practical purposes, that they are husband and wife. You infer it from behavior toward one another when seen in public and from the interest they manifest in the children born to the woman.

If a missionary preacher in Utah, from like circumstances, makes a like inference, as to the polygamous martial relations between persons professing to believe in the divinity of polygamy, all Mormons and their Jack-Mormon hirelings call him a liar and demand the proof of eye-witnesses to the ceremony, always performed in secret, and all parties to which are interested to prevent publicity. I insist that this is hardly in accord with the efforts of honest men really seeking for truth.

During all the years when Gentiles were in control of the courts and the juries, and the entire federal treasury

and federal power was behind the scores of United States marshals and the court machinery, seeking to convict polygamists, the total number of convictions for polygamy during the two score years was about six, and in these cases the conviction was secured only because one of the parties to the polygamous marriage turned state's evidence. This does not prove that there were only six polygamous marriages in Utah, any more than Mr. Peet's bluff-reward now proves that there are no new unlawful marriages. In those old days it was boasted that there were 3,500 polygamous families. A few of these had forty wives. Assuming an average of ten wives, and there must have been over thirty thousand polygamous marriages admittedly performed, and yet only a half dozen convictions for "polygamy" were ever secured, even with the gentile courts, juries, and court machinery. Is it any wonder, then, that no one cares to call Mr. Peet's cheap and safe bluff, offering a reward for conviction before judges elected by Mormons and juries composed of Mormons? To him, of course, nothing less would be "reasonable proof." Bancroft Library

All the years from 1833 to 1852 the Mormons were accused of polygamy or something a close kin to it. During all these years they denied it in every solemn manner known to honest men, and after 1852 solemnly admitted that all these years they had knowingly lied, and they justified their falsehoods by holy writ. (For a compilation of a few of these falsehoods and the admission and justification, see "Facts Concerning Polygamy," by myself.)

During the trials for "unlawful cohabitation," which

is a different offense from "polygamy," women, whom everybody believed to be virtuous according to Mormon standards, would get upon the witness stand and swear to tell the truth and state that they did not know who was the father of their babes, and this evident and shameless perjury was generally justified. It is because of this special brand of Mormon conscience that no one will care to call Mr. Peet's bluff. His undemanded reward does not prove that the preachers are liars who assert that persons have, since 1890, acquired the habit and repute of polygamous marriage; it only proves that Mr. Peet knows what Mormon juries would do and his confidence in the continuing Mormon ability to secure effective perjury. If, then, Mr. Peet desires to prove that in the quoted statements a falsehood has been proclaimed by Utah preachers; he must find some more convincing evidence than his flip bluff of offering a reward which proves nothing to the point.

Even if a conviction for a new polygamy between Mormons by some accident could be secured Mr. Peet, and his guarantor Mr. Loose, would refuse to pay the money because such a conviction could not prove that "it has been performed or sanctioned by the Mormon Church," because no general conference of the church ever indorsed that particular or any other particular marriage. In Utah no one pretends to deny that Apostles Abraham H. Cannon, Teasdale and Cowley have taken on new polygamous wives, and it would be interesting to have Mr. Peet explain why some prominent officials preferred to leave their homes rather than

appear before the Smoot Committee and testify about their knowledge of new polygamous marriages.

The "honest" Mr. Peet says that the Ministerial Association of Salt Lake "wanted to convey to the minds of the people of this country that Senator Smoot was a polygamist." In their protest sent to Washington, published to all the world and signed by these ministers, they say of Mr. Smoot, "We accuse him of no offense cognizable by law." That is equal to saying: "We do not accuse him of being a polygamist." Isn't that a queer way of conveying to others the impression that Senator Smoot is a polygamist? And yet the very honest Mr. Peet wants us to believe that others are liars.

The next charge of this conscientious Peet is that Maria Weed at Cincinnati said "that Senator Smoot at one time had five wives," etc. One Cincinnati paper did so report Mrs. Weed's lecture, but she did not so state. What she in fact said was that Joseph F. Smith had five wives. Immediately after having her attention called to the erroneous report, she wrote the editor demanding a correction, and from him received a letter promising that correction would be made. That letter she immediately sent to her employers in New York. These facts were told me at that time.

If this honest real estate agent has really any personal knowledge of the work done by those whom he maligns, he must know that in practically all her lectures, Mrs. Weed has expressly disclaimed that Mr. Smoot was a polygamist, and she has been repeatedly so reported by the daily press. Will Mr. Peet now show that he is as conscientious as Mrs. Weed, and himself made such a

correction as she demanded in justice to Mr. Smoot? I fear not. This lecturer is paid for telling what she believes is true. Mr. Peet is probably paid for remaining maliciously ignorant. Upon the question of Helen Gould having dropped \$6,000 into the anti-Smoot campaign, I am sure he is in error. She is a member of the Interdenominational Council of women which is prominently engaged in that work, but she has not increased her annual subscription of a few hundred dollars on account of the Smoot case.

Our discriminating Methodist Saint Peet seems to have discovered that the newspapers are always truthful in misreporting preachers, and always lie when saying unpleasant things about Mormons. As to his charges against the Rev. Duncan J. McMillan, the accused parson writes this to me: "While I was speaking at Delmonico's, in November, 1903, I was interrupted with the question: 'Is Mr. Smoot a polygamist?' In reply, I said: 'I have no personal knowledge of Mr. Smoot's domestic affairs, I never saw the man. Mr. Lelich charges him with the offense of polygamy, and many others believe he has more than one wife, but in the absence of larger proof, the charge is not made whole by the contestants.'" Here again our "honest" friend is in error.

Mr. Peet, who is so sensitive about honesty, denounces as "one of the grossest lies ever told by an individual" an alleged statement by Dr. Paden, as follows: "Senator Smoot [has] sworn to obey and execute the decrees of the [Mormon] church and to avenge the blood of the prophets Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and to teach his

children and their children's children unto the third and fourth generation, so to do, [the people of the United States being all included among 'the slayers of these people'] and that Senator Smoot is an enemy to the government."

Scores of Mormon apostates, all more honest than Mr. Peet has shown himself to be and all having means of knowledge, under oath, have declared that in the Endowment House every Mormon takes an oath substantially in the words used by Dr. Paden. To this, Mormons only enter a general denial. When asked what the oath is, so that one can determine whether their general denial is a mere quibble about the words used, they decline to become specific.

But this statement of Dr. Paden does not rest solely upon the testimony of apostates, but every element of it can be corroborated by numerous admissions of Mormon leaders, as published in official Mormon organs.

It is not possible to here quote all the admissions of this character, but a sample may be given just to show whether Dr. Paden or Mr. Peet is the more honest.

In two church publications in my possession, I find a sermon of an Apostle containing the following: "When we entered into the kingdom of God [the Mormon church] we covenanted [swore] to obey his [God's] counsel and knew we should have to receive it from his servants [the Mormon authorities]. * * * What, render obedience to that which I know to be wrong? Yes, or why did you come into the kingdom of God [the Mor-

mon church] or throw yourself voluntarily under the superintendence of its head?" That seems to clinch the matter of a covenant to do wrong by divine Mormon command.

Upon the question of the Endowment oath of vengeance, I will quote Brigham Young, as reported in a Mormon publication. He said: "*We shall know by the [Mormon] Battalion gathering all together, who have got the spirit of vengeance to revenge the blood of Prophets, shed in Carthage jail, and we will do it or swear our children to never rest nor give up till the blood of the Prophets is avenged upon those that dwell upon the earth.*"

This looks very much like Brigham Young's admission to the truth of what scores of apostates swear is true. Thus, the question of veracity is not between Dr. Paden and the honest Peet, but rather one as to whether the latter, a Methodist, or Brigham Young is best informed upon the question of a Mormon oath of vengeance.

Upon the treasonable character of the Mormon church and its ambition to establish a theocracy, "the temporal Kingdom of God," an abundance has been written and few except men whose salary or station in the church requires that they remain ignorant of the facts, would now deny the apparent fact. Only to the extent that a Mormon is weak in his faith can he be exempt from the charge that he owes an allegiance in matters of state higher than any which he yields to the state, *and that those to whom these allegiance is given have an often*

expressed ambition to construct a theocracy upon the ruins of the United States, in which "Theo-Democracy" Mormon leaders will rule by divine right. (For a few of these authoritative declarations see "The Gospel Concerning Church and State.") Whether such an allegiance is worse than polygamy I do not care to discuss.

This immaculate Methodist promotor, Peet of Utah, seems never to have heard of the Blood Atonement of apostates, but with a characteristic mind of the maliciously ignorant he denounces as liars those who assert that blood atonement of apostates is a doctrine of Mormonism often practiced in the past.

If Mr. Peet, the right honorable and the very honest Mr. Peet, cares to know a few things about blood atonement, I ask him to read in *The Truth Seeker* of April 15, 1905, where a score of sermons upon the subject are quoted from authorized Mormon publications. After that he may read the confessions of Danite Bill Hickman, and Cradlebough's speech in Congress, John D. Lee's confession as to the mountain meadow massacre, and a half dozen equally authentic narratives of what was done by the "saints" pursuant to this infamous doctrine.

If Mr. Smoot has any sense, he will dispatch his fool-killer after such men as this Methodist Peet. At present, owing to the incompetence of those who furnished Judge Tayler the facts against Smoot, the Senator may possibly keep his seat. However, it would be just as

well not to send out too many challenges for more evidence. The bluff might be called.

Permit me to subscribe myself a truth-seeker, who believes in justice, even to preachers.

THEODORE SCHROEDER.

63 East 59th Street, New York City.

P. S.—Since this was first published the Mormon Apostles have dropped two of their number who had taken polygamous wives since the manifesto, and had the indiscretion to allow it to be discovered by the general public. Wonder if Mr. Peet and his guarantor paid the offered reward to Jos. F. Smith for his discovery of a polygamist? No! I don't wonder, either. Of course he didn't, and never intended to pay it to any one, under any circumstances.

T. S.



