

AMONG THE SAINTS.

The Colorado Editors in Salt Lake.

One of Them Presents the Mormon Cause.

Which He Does With an Attorney's Enthusiasm.

Denver Tribune, July 24.

When the recent editorial excursion started to Salt Lake it was agreed that every member was determined in advance to make it warm for the Mormons on his return.

The journey over developed nothing but monotonous scenery and intensified prejudice against the saints.

"Well, see here, I want to tell you something," edging up closer, where he could almost whisper in my ear, "when you go back just give the Mormons a— in your paper."

"I don't know about that. Thus far I am favorably impressed. Their thrift and industry surprises me."

"Oh, God! That is the trouble. All you eastern editors allow yourselves to be captured by the saints. They treat you white while you are on a visit, but just stay here five or six years and be kicked like we have been and you would see the situation in a different light."

"Well, do I understand you to deny that you are a wonderfully industrious set of people?"

"D—n their industry. They are a foul and loathsome blot upon civilization."

"What harm do they do you?"

"They are trying to break up my business and ruin me."

"What is your business?"

"I keep a saloon."

At this stage of the conversation the time for me to alight from the car had come, and I gave the victim of Mormon intolerance a sympathetic farewell bow.

Meeting a liberal-minded gentleman from Washington city at one of the hotels I drew him into conversation on the Mormon question, and found that he had some surprising views.

"In the rotten and corrupt capital where I live," said he, "nearly every fellow who can afford it keeps a mistress besides his wife, and a good many keep two or three mistresses. That is all right. It don't shock civilization at all. But these same fellows, and their kind, come out to Utah upon all sorts of adventures, and find here a set of hard-working religious fanatics who ask nothing but the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No matter how absurd their ideas may be, they have a right to enjoy them. But these Gentile scoundrels see a chance to invoke the prejudices of the American people against polygamy, and propose to do it in order to run the Mormons out and get their property for nothing. I'll say there is not a bigger bonanza in sight anywhere. The immovable real estate of these singular fanatics is worth many millions. They will abandon it all before they will give up their religion. To force this alternative on them is the Gentile issue of the hour and all visitors who are not willing to believe all the extravagant Gentile stories, and are not ready to retail them back east are treated with scorn. In fact, you will find yourself so cornered that you will have to return and lie about the Mormons in order to avoid the suspicion that you hanker to become a polygamist yourself."

After mulling with both Mormons and Gentiles it is difficult to give an account of the situation that is not colored. Both sides assert so much and prove so little that to get at the truth is no small job. To a man determined to be just it must be confessed that the appearances are with the Mormons. Their highly cultivated farms, which would do credit to any agricultural community on the face of the earth, enchant the stranger and he asks himself if there must not be something good in a system that has thus literally made the desert blossom as the rose. All the farming is in their hands. It is Mormon hands that sweat with honest toil. The gamblers, the saloon keepers, the pimps and the patrons of prostitutes, the adventurers and speculators and drones, may be fairly said to be all Gentiles, or opponents of the "foul blot of civilization." About one-fifth of the legitimate business men of the city, and the most of the mining investors are also Gentiles. But the Gentile merchants are not rampant in their opposition to the Mormons. On the contrary, they are called "Jack Mormons" by the political hummers and office holding clique, and are charged with cowardice and with toadying to Mormon customers.

The fact is that in spite of their co-operation store, which is a good thing to keep down prices, the Mormons largely patronize and chiefly sustain the Gentile merchants. Some of their fanatical leaders insist that it is suicide, but such narrow teaching has but little effect.

But the Gentile lawyers are ostracized and "persecuted." Nine-tenths of the disputes among Mormons are settled by a church arbitration committee, and this results in just nine-tenths less business for the disciples of Blackstones. Hence the legal fraternity is exceedingly anxious to wipe out the "foul blot."

The "blatant priests on this 'snaremetal' oligarchy" preach these noble patriots, the saloon keepers, with equal cruelty. They preach to their benighted followers that benzene is Gentile poison and must be avoided. The result of this tyranny is that but precious few Mormons are drunkards, and, as the Mormons constitute four-fifths of the population, the whiskey business is not prosperous. At present all the saloons are organized to resist the Mormon temperance measures, and in their efforts to "crush out the loathsome practice of polygamy" they expect the prayers of all

our Protestant, Catholic and Jewish churches. In honest frankness, it is absurd to deny that the Utah Gentiles who are filling this broad land with their lamentations over polygamy and are posing before mankind as the struggling champions of Christian virtue, are, on the whole, a set of humbugs. Indeed, they admit with a sly wink, that they are "not missionaries." They are strictly on the make and are not one whit superior, morally, to the pioneers, who, in the name of the Lord, made Leadville what it is. Indeed, they are not so good. For the Leadville speculators did not resort to hypocritical pretenses and did not seek to avail themselves of a national prejudice. There is no objection to letting the Gentiles continue their fight, but it should be conducted in the open on its merits, and not under the cloak of a virtuous combat with polygamy.

The Gentiles desire above all things to get control of the politics of Utah. In order to do this they must get rid of the Mormons, who are as clanish as some of our own religious sects. The Mormon leaders are keen politicians as well as expert theologians. They have a soft thing and are making money. They excite the envy rather than the disgust of the Gentile sharers.

The Mormon apostles who rule the church and manage its millions of property do not have the religious look. They are free in their sermons from the clerical whang. They look like thrifty and intelligent bankers and merchants, and talk common sense from the pulpit in a business tone.

It is fair to say that polygamy is not the corner-stone of Mormonism. The latter is a Protestant religious faith, with a church organization which, in wonderful perfection, is only second to that of Rome. Not one Mormon in ten has over one wife. The few having two wives are not the most devoted to the faith. Cut out all the polygamists, and you would still have in Utah a devoted church of over 100,000 souls. They all believe polygamy a divine permission, but don't choose to enjoy it. That they don't is the highest tribute to their virtue. Indeed, virtue is inseparable from a people whose chief characteristic is industry.

The Gentiles in Utah are not hopeful. The supreme court and congress and the railroads are practically with the Mormons. Among the leading Gentiles predictions are freely made that a civil war will result from the refusal of congress to stamp out polygamy. They say that the Mormon government of the territory exempts the railroads from taxation in exchange for protection at Washington.

All attempts to prosecute the Mormons for bigamy must fail to accomplish anything more than to bind the saints more closely together and to give a few scrubby government officials the national notoriety they seem to crave. Mormon juries will acquit their accused brethren every time. A law that would select Gentile juries would be unconstitutional and tyrannical. But if this difficulty could be overcome, convictions would be impossible for the want of evidence. The supreme court holds that a wife cannot testify against her husband, and one who was hired to do so had no evidence against her polygamite spouse ruled out. "All we want," say the baffled Gentiles, "is a change in the law of evidence." They want the fact that a man belongs to the Mormon church made prima facie proof that he is guilty of bigamy. But the same Gentiles who have the cheek to ask for this monstrous violation of the constitution and of common justice admit that not one-tenth of the Mormon married men have more than one wife. The absurdity of their proposition is plain. It were better to burn all the people in Utah, Gentile and Mormon, at the stake than to sacrifice our constitutional safeguards. No "slight change" in the law of evidence will be made by the American people.

After studying Utah carefully I am prepared to answer some questions. If asked when I think Mormonism will die out, I reply that it will decay when other religions do. If asked when I think polygamy will be abandoned I reply that it will cease as a practice about the time that houses of prostitution are stamped out. If asked whether it is real religion or a sensual desire to have more than one wife which makes men Mormon I reply that out of twenty cases, real religion is in nineteen and sensuality in only one is the impelling motive. The desire of poor people in Europe to get homes of their own induces Mormons to come to Utah, but does not keep them to their faith. They pay their own way out.

In addition to Utah the Mormons have captured Idaho—have a majority of the voters—and will probably take in Arizona. They are coming to Colorado in considerable numbers, and calculate to secure toleration here by holding the balance of power between our two parties. This much they will probably accomplish. It is the way our gamblers and prostitutes secure toleration.

The women in Utah are devoted to polygamy, all stories to the contrary notwithstanding. They say it gives every woman the glorious privilege of wifehood and maternity. One social advantage about it is a young lady who falls in love is not compelled to pine away when she hears that he is married. The courtship goes right on. The irksome thing about polygamy to the women is that their austere religion compels them to dress plainly. Many of the girls have pretty and intelligent faces, but their lack of fine clothes puts them at a great disadvantage when compared to the women of Denver. It is a fact that Mormon girls hanker to marry Gentile men, but this is due to their passion for dress rather than to their objection to polygamy. The Gentiles detested themselves with the hope that female suffrage would enable the Mormon women to rebel against polygamy. But the result has been shown that the ballot in their hands is the stronghold of the peculiar institution.

Mormonism is growing, and the wealth of the church is rapidly increasing. There is money in it, and money hires brains.

The titling every Mormon has to pay (one-tenth of all he makes), is a rock on which the church will go to pieces. It has already caused all the desertions that have taken

place. Some of the richest merchants in Salt Lake could not stand the tax. They have availed themselves, and are now "highly respectable" in the eyes of the Gentiles.

Having said this much in behalf of the "other side," I now resign my appointment as temporary journalistic attorney for the Mormons.

But before closing I feel bound to reflect that Mormonism in Salt Lake is a lucky thing for Denver. It will not prevent our city from getting the trade of the Mormons if we treat them with even a pretense of fairness, but it will prevent Salt Lake from becoming a successful commercial rival. Gentiles are so prejudiced against the Mormons, and such a bitter feeling exists between the two elements, that the former will settle here when they really wish to settle in Salt Lake. On the returning train were several Utah mine owners coming to Denver to buy residences for their families.

J. E. L.

MISSOURI SNAKES. A Fatal Bite Near St. Joseph.

St. Joe Gazette, July 26. Jimmie Gardner, living with Mr. Wood, near Amazon, was bitten by a snake Sunday night and will probably die. Gardner had been out in the country somewhere to see a young lady friend. On his return home he put his horse in the stable and then went to the crib to get some corn for him. While gathering up the ears his hand struck a soft something coiled up like a rope. He caught hold of it to see what it was and immediately received a wound on his hand. The bite was accompanied by but little pain, and it appeared as though the serpent sucked the wound. Gardner jerked his hand back immediately and the snake slipped away. As soon as he had felt his horse he walked into the house. The wound was but a small affair and Gardner paid but little attention to it. Along in the night, however, his arm began to pain him, and grew worse. A physician was summoned. When he arrived the arm was twice its natural size and of all the colors of the rainbow.

The doctor saw at a glance what was the matter and at once began applying the necessary antidotes. It appeared that nothing he could do was powerful enough to overcome the poisonous fluid found in snakes' fangs. Gardner steadily grew worse and at last accounts was suffering untold agonies. A high fever had set in and the pain in the arm intensified. The physician still clings to the belief that he can save the life of his patient by sacrificing the arm, if in no other way.

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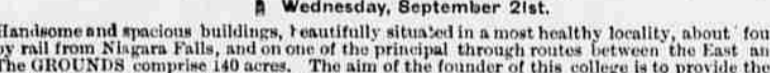
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