

Are You Interested ?

An article setting forth
in plain facts and direct
terms, the history and
defense of a misrepre-
sented people.

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Reorganized
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints

HE that answereth a
matter before he
heareth it, it is folly and
shame unto him.

—Proverbs 18;13.

Are You Interested ?

Are you interested in knowing the facts concerning other societies and churches than your own? It will not hurt any man's religion to correctly understand the religion of others unless his own be of that kind that will not bear comparison. It should be a source of shame to any man not to correctly understand his neighbors. Not only should he understand others, but he should seek to free himself of prejudice, which is one of the prevailing crimes of the age. No man can be a true man that will allow his mind to be influenced before he has heard all sides of the question upon which he is to render judgment.

In the minds of casual and careless readers, all Latter Day Saints are of one kind, or, if not, are very much alike. But there are two very distinct churches bearing a similar name that differ on more than one hundred points of church doctrine and policy. No two other churches differ more widely. One has its headquarters at Salt Lake City, Utah. The other has its headquarters at Independence, Missouri. This latter church is a real orthodox, Christian society and is worthy the respect of all good people both in, and out, of all churches. As we proceed, we hope the reader will keep this latter church in mind while we show the difference between the two: the evils of the one, the ethics of the other. The former is usually called Mormon, and the latter, The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ, but each is referred to as Latter Day Saint. The Reorganized church is little spoken of in history and often that little is a misrepresentation. For that reason, that the truth may be known, this little tract is written. Are you interested, or would you prefer to remain in the dark on this matter? All true men will wish to "do unto others as they would that others should do unto them." That course is the one marked out by the Author and Finisher of the Christian faith.

The Utah Mormons are located largely in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains and extending northward into Alberta, Canada. The Reorganized Church members are located in all the States of the Union and in the larger cities. Also in the Provinces of Canada and in foreign countries.

The Difference Strictly Drawn.

The Mormon Church accepts polygamy as the celestial law of marriage.

The Reorganization advocates the one wife system, and is more radically opposed to polygamy than is any other church.

The late Joseph Smith who died at his home in Independence, Missouri, wrote more volumes against polygamy than any other man in either ancient or modern times. His cousin, Joseph (F.) Smith, late president of the Mormon church, was quite a different kind of man, having five wives and many children.

Two churches having a similar name and each with a Joseph Smith at the head, confused the two in the minds of reluctant readers, while at the same time furnishing material for the unjust, who, for the effect, wish to confound the two. The two churches differ most widely, and are very dissimilar both in spirit and in practice. The Reorganized Church is an honorable and respected society among all those who know it best. This paper will set forth its history quite in contradistinction to public opinion and the errors of history.

This society is incorporated under both the laws of the United States and of Canada under the name of: "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." The Mormon church does not have the word "Reorganized" prefixed to its title.

Frederick M. Smith, son of the late Joseph Smith, is now president of the Reorganized Church, the headquarters of which are at Independence, Missouri.

What They Declare Who Know.

It is quite honorable, and also a Christian duty, to oppose the evils of the Mormon people. The Reorganization has

been, and is, foremost in that opposition. But it is a libel and a slander to connect the Reorganization with those whom they most oppose and from whom they differ so widely. The misinformed are liable to do that, and judging by the amount of false information printed concerning this society there are many who have not informed themselves and some even like to have it so. Religious prejudice is largely to blame, for it is that side that is usually represented in histories and encyclopedias. Any writer who connects these two societies or refers to the Reorganized Church as Mormons, discredits his own work.

Mr. Bancroft, America's greatest historian, and perhaps the greatest historian of any country, says of the Latter Day Saints under the presidency of the first Joseph Smith: "When the testimony on both sides is carefully weighed, it must be admitted that the Latter Day Saints in Missouri, and in Illinois were, as a class, a more moral, honest, temperate, and hard working, self-denying and thrifty people, than the Gentiles by whom they were surrounded."

All those who "Weigh both sides," must invariably come to the same conclusion.

Both by the law of the church and by the law of the land, the successor of the founder of the church was his own son, also named Joseph Smith; and not Brigham Young as so many little informed writers aver. As so many of these writers are so little informed on the point of succession, so are they little informed or misinformed concerning the doctrine, history, and policy of both the Old, and the Reorganization. No writer who uses the term Mormon, when referring to the Reorganization, is to be fully trusted. The use of this opprobrious epithet reveals their prejudice, and no prejudiced writer is to be trusted.

The following are articles nine and ten of the constitution of the Reorganized Church, as accepted by the Latter Day Saints under the late Joseph Smith:

"We believe that marriage is ordained of God; and that the law of God provides for but one companion in wedlock, for

either man or woman, except in case of death when either is at liberty to marry again."

"We believe that a plurality of wives is heresy and opposed to the law of God."

The 1883 edition of the Encyclopedia Britanica says:

"This sect originated in 1851, seven years after the death of Joseph Smith, when several officers of the church met and repudiated Brigham Young as not being the divinely appointed, and legitimate successor to Joseph Smith, and for promulgating such false doctrines as polygamy, Adam as God and the right to shed the blood of an apostate.

"The Reorganized Church holds that the legitimate successor to Joseph Smith was his eldest son, and that the Reorganized Church is the only true and lawful continuation of and successor to the original church and is entitled in law to the original church property and rights."

Presently we shall see that the courts sustain this claim.

The American Encyclopedia, edition of 1875 says: "A portion of the Mormons reject polygamy and do not approve of Brigham Young or the church in Utah."

Chambers' Encyclopedia, edition of 1891 declares that: "Emma, wife and widow of Joseph Smith, stoutly denied that her husband ever had any wife but herself. Her four sons have now founded a monogamic community called Josephites but naming themselves the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."

The History of Decatur County, Iowa, speaking of the late President of the Reorganized Church, says: "As a citizen no man outranks him in fealty to the government. As a man, his character, honor and integrity stand unquestioned. His church has grown into a body of persistent workers loved of their neighbors."

"The Iowa State Register, March 20, 1887 says: "The Reorganized Church under President Smith not only refrains from endorsing polygamy, but is perhaps the most alert and active enemy that the abomination has."

The Cleveland, Ohio, Herald, April 6, 1883, says: "As a class the Reorganized Church, gathered within the Old Tem-

ple, were as fine a looking religious body of men and women as ever gathered together."

The same paper of April 9: "A more devout or conscientious body of delegates never assembled. Nothing can exceed the persistency with which this church denounce the evils of the Utah Church. In intellectual acumen I think they stand above the average clergy assemblies."

The Independence, Missouri, Sentinel, April 7, 1888, has the following good word to say of their neighbors: "It is no longer excusable to charge upon the Reorganized Church sympathy with the polygamists. They regard the Salt Lake dogma with loathing and disgust, and teach and keep the marriage relation as sacredly as other Protestant people."

"The sobriety of these people and their testimony against all forms of dissipation does them great honor and ought to silence the tongue of ignorant criticism. Men are entitled to credit for lives of usefulness and morality, and there should be no disposition to withhold it from them."

The above editorial, where the largest congregation of this society is located, should have more weight than "ignorant criticism."

Origin and History.

On the sixth day of April, 1830, at Fayette in the state of New York, the restored church of Jesus Christ had its origin by divine command, following exactly the New Testament pattern in all things.

Joseph Smith, a noble young man of twenty-five years of age, and Oliver Cowdery, a talented young school teacher, were chosen First and Second Elders respectively, of this organization.

In fourteen years the church grew to nearly two hundred thousand members, including persons of all trades and professions. No other church has ever made more rapid progress in so short a time. Religious persecution ran riot when, at last, the president of the church was murdered by a misguided mob led by two local ministers.

Joseph Smith had shortly before been endorsed for presi-

dent of the United States by a state convention in Illinois. Political enemies united with religious fanatics to make President Smith's murder a certainty.

Upon the death of President Smith, the church became divided. A large number followed Brigham Young to Utah. The others waited for the son of Joseph Smith, also named Joseph, to become their leader. During eight years of waiting, disintegration and disorganization set in, making it necessary for a reorganization which took place at Amboy, Illinois, in 1860. Hence the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, in contradistinction to the followers of Brigham Young in Utah. This was according to the laws of the church.

In the highest courts of both the United States and Canada the Reorganization has been acknowledged as the lawful successor.

Some Further Facts.

We will next notice the noble character of the founder of the church and later that of his son and grandson. The Protestant reformers bore no better character than Joseph Smith the first, founder of the church; or either of his successors; Protestant writers to the contrary notwithstanding. Human nature would be quite reversed before good people could be persuaded to follow so vile a leader as many histories and encyclopedias make him to appear. The charge of anything in his conduct contrary to an honorable Christian life, is only religious persecution, and is untrue. How can an intelligent reader harmonize the very excellent character of his followers, the high ideals of their doctrine, and the good work they are doing everywhere, with such false history. It will not harmonize. Those false yarns, idle tales, and vicious stories, have been disproven a thousand times. But it is hard to correct a popular error. To be popular, or to be right, often puzzles little minds. Latter Day Saints of the Reorganized Church, prefer to be right, while at the same time seeking to correct what they know to be the errors of popular history.

The Errors of History.

No deeper laid plot, and none of more diabolical dimension was ever hatched than the effort to slander Joseph Smith by charging him with the crime of polygamy. History does not deal with a greater surprise than the recent revelation of facts which exonerate him in that matter. It is a strange comment indeed, on the civilization of this age of the world, when a man for nearly a century could be falsely accused of the very thing he most opposed.

The reason is plain, and may be summed up in two words: "RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION." Ancient history groans with such injustice, but in this enlightened age we would hardly expect to find ourselves hurled back into the dark ages, and find humanity still as unjust as those of that time. Satan has quite kept pace with the progress of the world and the civilization of the age in which we live. His long experience with human nature fully prepares him to deceive the civilized mind as readily as the uncivilized one.

A weapon he most conceals, and one least and last suspected by many, is *exparte* evidence. (i. e. where the party himself has not been heard.) Because of this fact, many acting honestly but unwisely, believe President Smith to have been guilty without inquiring into the other side. One would think, in this age of the world the other side would be asked for, and President Smith be given a chance to speak for himself. Many persons allow themselves to be influenced by *exparte* evidence and more especially if appearing in print. Until recently, many histories, encyclopedias, and popular newspapers, preferred to accept this kind of evidence on this question rather than attempt to correct a popular error. Even yet in many places their forced corrections are unwillingly made.

Religious Prejudice.

Had this matter been a business or scientific affair, the other side would not only have been asked for, but demanded. But, being a religious question, religious prejudice played its part most adeptly. Joseph Smith has suffered most unjustly at the hands of religious zealots, and not a little from unin-

formed writers and school instructors. Those who have stopped to examine both sides of this question, not only find nothing to condemn him, but, on the contrary, find much to commend him. For their pains, however, they are often frowned upon by the partisan pulpit and press. All the more therefore, is the injustice deepened, as those becoming better informed are also blackened in character and discredited before men.

Another reason for the erroneous public opinion and antipathy against Joseph Smith, was the financial inability of himself and friends to combat the prejudiced pulpit and press. The proofs of the noble character of the man had existed from the first, but few could pay for their publication, and few papers cared to correct public opinion on this matter.

One almost feels himself hurled back several hundred years, when comparing facts with public opinion relative to the Smith origin of polygamy. The historian Bancroft said of this matter: "Never before has it been my lot to meet with such a mass of mendacity. The attempts of almost all who have written upon the subject seem to have been to make out a case rather than to state facts. Each author apparently endeavored to surpass his predecessor in the libertinism of abuse. Most of these books are written in a sensational style and for the purpose of deriving profit by pandering to a vitiated public taste, and are wholly unreliable as to facts."

After all, when one gets back to the ground after aviating the hot air of public opinion concerning Joseph Smith, he will conclude that humanity is yet human and still susceptible of being deceived. He was persecuted to death for no other reason than that his opinions differed from those of his religious neighbors, however closely he may have followed in the footsteps of our Lord.

One Wife, One Husband.

The teachings of Joseph Smith can best be obtained in the faith of the church which he founded. It was only five years old, (in 1835,) when the following declaration of faith was

adopted by the only ecumenical council ever held in the church:

"Inasmuch as this Church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and polygamy, we declare that we believe that one man should have one wife, and one woman but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again."

That article of faith was in force and on the statute books of the church during the lifetime of Joseph Smith. It is still in force in the church presided over by his grandson. The Utah Church however, not only repudiated it, but expunged it from their statute books without even the action of a quarterly conference, much less an ecumenical council.

The same council of 1835 which adopted the above article on marriage, also adopted the following marriage ceremony:

"You both mutually agree to be each other's companion, husband and wife, observing the legal rights belonging to this condition, that is, keeping yourselves wholly for each other, and from all others during your lives?"

This ceremony has never been repealed, but is still in force, and, like the other, utterly prohibits polygamy. Joseph Smith's idea of this crime was stamped on his society by their declarations.

Joseph Smith, the Second.

The following appeared in the daily papers at the time of his death at Independence, Missouri, in December, 1914:

"In the ecclesiastical dogmas which made up the denominational belief of the late Joseph Smith the general public has no particular interest. But in the death of the late venerable head of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the country loses an interesting and useful citizen. Joseph Smith was considerably more than a powerful churchman into whose keeping had been committed the destinies of one of the great denominations of the world.

"Those who ignorantly confounded the Reorganized Church with Mormonism, in the objectionable acceptance of that term, will not appreciate the theological distinctions between

the two, nor understand that nothing was more hateful to Joseph Smith than the doctrines of Brigham Young, with their polygamous teachings and all the other features which make Utah Mormonism obnoxious in the eyes of the average American.

“But all who ever came in contact with Joseph Smith could readily appreciate the broad charity of his tenets, the untarnished private life he lived, the unswerving devotion to duty which he always displayed and the simple modesty of his relations toward his church and the world at large. To his church he was the prophet whom all its communicants revered, but he was also the unostentatious leader who constantly practiced the virtues which he enjoined upon his followers. To the world he was the blameless citizen who walked before all men as an example and whose interest in the movements that made for the welfare of the community always had his heartiest support.

“Perhaps nothing could give a clearer insight into the character of Joseph Smith than the directions which he issued shortly before his death in respect to his funeral. Disliking nothing so much, next to sham, as ostentation, he directed that his funeral should be conducted with the utmost simplicity, without any of the elaborateness which his followers would otherwise have provided in order to testify to the honor in which they held him.

“He was the prophet, but first of all he was the Christian gentleman and the good citizen. As such he lived, as such he died, as such he will be remembered by all outside the household of his faith. His followers themselves can have no legacy of remembrance more honorable than this appraisal of the people among whom he lived and labored so many years.

“Kindly, cheerful, loyal to his own creed, tolerant of those of others, standing for modesty, simplicity, good citizenship, embodying in his private and public life all the virtues which adorn a character worthy of emulation—such is the revelation which Joseph Smith leaves to the world, as the real interpretation of an ecclesiastical message translated into terms of human character.”—*Kansas City Journal*, December 12, 1914.

Jesus said: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Better test was never given. More rigorous test was never submitted to. Joseph Smith was a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ all of his manhood years. He was its president and prophet for fifty-four years. As such he was its chief exponent in life, character, and teaching.

Too often the church is judged by those who violate her precepts. Let her now be judged by one who for so long a time made an honest and generally a successful effort to conform to her teachings.

Again it is said: "Like father like son." If there is anything in heredity, Joseph Smith, the Martyr, founder of the church, under divine direction, in 1830, may be judged by the son, who at his death, December 10, 1914, terminated fifty-four years of leadership.

That which we term "the latter-day message," or the "restored gospel," as taught by the church organized in 1830, and as still taught by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, demanded and still demands personal as well as community righteousness. Let the message and the church be judged by their fruits.

What the Courts Say.

When the Utah Mormon Church apostatized from the original faith, it claimed the original church property. This made it necessary to settle the matter by law. The title to a Temple in Ohio; the title to a Temple Lot in Missouri; the right of ministers of the Reorganization in Canada to perform legal acts as other Christian ministers, have been passed upon by the higher courts.

The Temple Case.

"The Court do find that the plaintiff, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the true and lawful continuation of, and successor to the said original church organized in 1830 and is entitled in law to all its rights and property."

"The church in Utah has materially and largely departed from the faith, doctrines, laws, ordinances and usages of said

original church, and has incorporated into its system of faith, the doctrines of Celestial Marriage and plurality of wives, contrary to the laws and constitution of said original church."—Court of Common Pleas, Lake County, Ohio. February term 1880.

The Dickout Case.

Chief Justice Armour of Canada, with other judges concurring, rendered the following decision where Reverend Dickout of the Reorganized Church was arrested for performing a marriage ceremony, he not being, as some thought, a Christian minister. The judge said:

"I have read the evidence over and find nothing contrary to the doctrine of Christ in the teaching of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The great trouble is, the Latter Day Saints' doctrine is Christian in the highest sense and the rest of the religious world is opposed to them because the Saints cling so closely to the Bible. It seems as though it is jealousy not justice that moves the action in this case. These people teach that one man should have one wife only, and they stand by that. The doctrine of this church is surely according to the Bible."

Why not accept the decisions of these judges who know?

Conclusions.

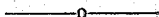
May it not be after all that like Nathaniel of old, one may find the truth where least expected? It may also be found that those whom "Men revile and persecute and say all manner of evil against FALSELY for Christ's sake are really the blessed of the Lord." (See Matthew 5: 11.)

Exparte evidence is often misleading. An examination of both sides is the safest method. We claim, and can prove, a misrepresentation of our faith and leaders, in popular history. We respectfully ask a hearing. We deplore the effort to forestall such hearing by the Protestant pulpit and press. We are able to tell what we believe. We know our own history best. A fair test is to look with suspicion on any production that refers to the Reorganized Church as

Mormon or to our faith as Mormonism. On the contrary it is most orthodox in faith and divine in authority, being the veritable Church of Jesus Christ, reorganized again among men.

With Jesus as the head, the doctrine of this church harmonizing in all points with the New Testament church, it is: "THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS."

While we have written much of the founder and subsequent leaders of the church, we do not unduly honor them. We only answer misstatements of history and give the facts concerning them. We hold Jesus as the true head of the church, the gospel of the New Testament as the true rule of faith, and the New Testament church as the true pattern. And in addition we claim and enjoy the New Testament gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.



Further information concerning the Reorganized Church and the restored gospel may be obtained from the Department of Publicity, Independence, Missouri, United States of America, Post Office Box 255.

On request you will be furnished with a catalog of publications. Let us tell you about the old Jerusalem gospel, with the ancient gifts and blessings and the ancient order of things, with apostles and prophets and all the officers which "God set in the church." See Ephesians 4:11-13.

Preaching by representatives of the restored church of God,

At

In

On

By

A most cordial invitation is extended to all.

