

Folio, 40½ cm. Paged [257]-272 (sixteen pages). A highly influential ". . . pictorial magazine founded by Fletcher Harper of the publishing firm of Harper and Brothers in 1857." -DAH 3:12.

An article entitled "THE MORMONS" occupies most of the front page (thirty-six column inches) of this early issue of the popular illustrated newspaper. In the first half of this editorial, the writer goes to great lengths to present the Mormon side of the argument for admission of Utah as a state. He considers issues of religious freedom, local sovereignty, and more subtle factors which the Saints might justifiably hold up in favor of their rights to both polygamy *and* statehood. He then spends the second half of the article explaining why polygamy cannot be tolerated.

What is perhaps most striking, however, is the remarkable point-for-point resemblance between these anti-Mormon arguments, and a rationale urged in our own time by many Latter-day Saints against another form of alternative marriage which they, in their own turn, decry as an unacceptable threat . . .

Whatever doubts casuists may raise, or legal doctors promulgate, *we* have no doubt that this *is* a Christian country. The amiable controversies of the Church have, indeed, rendered it a task somewhat more than human to determine what Christianity is. But we suppose, notwithstanding the bickerings, and feuds, and religious wars, and *auto da fes* [Inquisitorial burning at the stake] of eighteen hundred years, still that there are certain notions, and principles, and tenets common to the Ultramontanists of Rome and the Universalists of America—to Archbishop Hughes and Mr. Theodore Parker—which distinguish Christianity from Paganism, from Buddhism, from Mormonism. These notions and principles we suppose to lie at the basis of our whole system.

Of these principles there is perhaps no one more vitally important than the institution of marriage. If it is permitted to us, miserable mortals, to pass judgment on the relative value or weight of the words of Supreme Wisdom, we should be tempted to say that the Divine Lawgiver pronounced no words so important to the future of the race as when he said, "They twain shall be one flesh." These words have created the wife and ennobled the mother; with the wife and the mother, they have softened, elevated, purified the husband and the father; they have turned the seraglio into a home, and have enabled freedom and civilization to supplant patriarchal and governmental despotism. So far as Christianity is the only religion which has defended, defined, in fact created the institution of marriage as we understand it, we believe that this is very certainly a Christian country.

In regard to religious freedom, toleration by a majority is one thing; the introduction of tenets of practices fatal to the substantial rights or dearest feelings of a whole class of the community is quite another. The legalization of polygamy is fatal to the institution of marriage. Christianity will be practically

excluded from every State which Mormonism is allowed to rule; and with Christianity marriage perishes. We permit Judaism, we have even allowed Buddhism to raise its unclean temple at San Francisco; but, as we say, to tolerate a minority is one thing—to allow a small and insignificant local minority to affect the manners and morals of a whole nation is a very different matter.

For be it observed, a wife in one State is, in many senses, a wife in another State. Whether a marriage can be made with one woman, as in New York, or with a dozen, as in Utah, the legal relation of husband and wife, if established in one State, must be recognized in the others. There lurks in the Constitution a little provision decreeing that "*the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.*" This diminutive clause is likely soon to assume colossal dimensions, and in no aspect would it be more formidable than in regard to Mormonism. If the citizen of New York would be protected in Utah in his position of husband as regards his one wife, it would be very difficult to show that Mr. Brigham Young had not the same "privileges and immunities" in New York as to his baker's dozen; and thus polygamy in Utah would be polygamy in New York.

We have thus far considered the matter on legal and constitutional grounds; but, in fact, this question will not be determined on any nice constitutional argument. It will be determined on feeling and sympathy, or, rather, on hatred and disgust. The people of this country never would, and never will, tolerate a set of obscene, licentious wretches as their fellows and equals. They never would, and never will, permit a horde of creatures, in every respect worse than Turks, to defy our habits, our tastes, our feelings, and our civilization.

If the specific mechanics (by which same-sex marriage in our own era will threaten heterosexual union) fail of compelling articulation in modern discourse, neither were the Latter-day Saints of 1857 impressed by the efforts of their fellow Americans to "[defend] . . . the institution of marriage as we understand it . . ." Less than three months after this editorial was published, an expeditionary force would march from Ft. Leavenworth, eventually growing to almost one-third of the U.S. Army. It was a travesty of mutual misunderstanding now remembered as the Utah War, 1857-58, noted by historian William P. MacKinnon as "the nation's most extensive and expensive military undertaking during the period between the Mexican and Civil wars." (private correspondence, December 31, 2004).

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The entry above is taken from *Mormon Parallels, A Bibliographic Source*, by Rick Grunder (Lafayette, New York: Rick Grunder - Books, 2008), pp. 641-42. It is the only entry in the book (of 500 entries, 2088 pages) which deals with same-sex marriage. Because of current interest, it may be reproduced without requesting permission, so long as it is quoted in full, unedited, as presented above. — RICK GRUNDER

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