ORIGIN OF POLYGAMY AMONG
LATTER DAY SAINTS.

The investigation, held during the early part of 1904, by a Senate committee to determine the fitness of Senator Reed Smoot to sit as a representative of the state of Utah, has brought to light some startling disclosures, and, incidentally re-opened the year's old controversy between the Utah Mormon church and the Reorganized church regarding the identity of the person responsible for the introduction of the doctrine of polygamy, as it is known among Latter Day Saints. We use the term, "Latter Day Saints," as designating all factions accepting the Restored Gospel.

It is now, and has been the claim of the Utah Mormons that Joseph Smith, founder of the religion, was responsible for the introduction of polygamy, or celestial marriage, as they choose to term the doctrine of plurality of wives. As Joseph Smith died in June, 1844, if the claim of the Utah church be correct
polygamy must have been introduced prior to that date.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, ruled over by Joseph Smith, a son of the founder of the religion, and composed of a few members of the original church, and many converts to their position, deny the assertions of the Utah church, and allege that Brigham Young was responsible for the introduction of polygamy.

The Church of Christ, with headquarters at Independence, Mo., adhering to the teachings of Granville Hedrick, an elder in the original church, and claiming to teach the doctrines as they existed, in their purity, in the year 1830, when the church was founded, admit the truth of the claim of the Utah church that polygamy was introduced and taught prior to June, 1844, at Nauvoo, Illinois, and other places, by officers in the church, presided over by Joseph Smith. That he had knowledge of such teaching; that he was publicly charged with having direct connection with the doctrine, and that the charges were made in the public prints of his own town and during his life-time; that he became convinced of the evil character of the doctrine, repented of his connection with it, and was actually making preparations to publicly denounce it, when his plan failed, on account of his speedy death.

The reader can make his own deductions relative to the spiritual condition of Joseph Smith, if indeed it transpires that he was really connected with such an abomination.

Before going into an examination of the evidence we intend to produce in an effort to trace the introduction of polygamy, we wish to make a few explanations of terms. Polygamy, to be exact, means a plurality of wives, or, of husbands. The doctrine commonly styled polygamy, but called The Celestial Order of Marriage by Utah Mormons, did not permit plurality of husbands, so could not properly be called polygamy.

There are other claims and ideas connected with Mormon plural marriage
that distinguishes it from common polygamy. The Utah church teaches the eternity of the marriage covenant, and the plural wives sealed to a man for eternity are supposed to be his in the worlds to come.

Thus when the church was reproached with the practice of polygamy, they denied it, and took mental refuge in the peculiar condition which technically permitted them to enter denial, while in fact they were guilty.

We think it can safely be asserted, and proven, that "polygamy," the term we shall use in designating the Mormon system of plural marriage, was not introduced full grown into the church, but was rather the outgrowth of another form of marriage, known as the spiritual-wife system, or "sealing."

As Utah Mormons do not deny the existence of this system, prior to the death of Joseph Smith, we will introduce but one witness from them, and several from the Reorganized church, which seems of late years to have chang-
ed its position regarding Joseph Smith's connection with the doctrine, and is at present denying what their leading men freely admitted, during the early days of their organization.

When the testimony was being taken in the suit brought by the Reorganized church against the Church of Christ, to gain possession of the Temple lots, at Independence, Mo., they put on the witness stand one James Whitehead, an official of their church, and who had been the private secretary of Joseph Smith, in Nauvoo, Ills. In testifying regarding the forms of marriage in the church Whitehead said:

There was an ordinance in the church for sealing, as early as 1842, or 1843.

Lorenzo Snow, one time president of the Utah Mormon church, testified in the same case that,—

I returned from that European Mission in the Spring of 1843, about the middle of April. I said in my direct examination that about ten days after I returned from that mission I had a private interview with Joseph Smith.
Origin of Polygamy

In that private interview was the time when he told me he had taken my sister as a wife. He did not say she was taken as a wife and married to him, he said she was sealed to him for eternity. I was not acquainted with the practice of sealing at that time.

Jason W. Briggs, one of the fathers of the Reorganization, and prior to his connection with them, a member of the old church, also testified in the case.

He said:

I heard something about a revelation on polygamy, or plural marriage, when I was in Nauvoo, in 1842. I heard there was one: there was talk going on about it at that time, and continued to be; but it was not called plural marriage; it was called sealing. — See pp. 349, 351, 505, Record, Temple Loc. suit.

These three witnesses agree there was an ordinance in existence at Nauvoo, for sealing a woman to a man. As to the date, Briggs says he heard of it, in 1842; Whitehead put it at the last end of 1842, or early in 1843, and Snow says when he reached Nauvoo, in 1843, he learned from Joseph Smith's own lips that Snow's sister had been "sealed" to him!

From this testimony we are safe in concluding that some new system of marriage, called "sealing," was known and practiced, at Nauvoo, as early as 1843, and with a strong probability that the year 1842 is the correct date.

Now that we have shown that a marriage system was practiced at Nauvoo, during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, we shall try to show what "Sealing" was.

Whitehead testified:

They would be married according to the laws of God, not only for time, but for eternity as well. — See Record, p. 507.

Briggs testified, P. 431, Record.

You asked what I understood this sealing to be at the time the talk was going on. What I understood it to be, was, sealing a woman to a man to be his wife to be his wife hereafter, his wife in the spirit world.

I was asked in my direct examination if I did not hear of the doctrine of polygamy, etc., and I answered that I talked with members with reference to sealing, and I understood that the doctrine of sealing was for eternity; it was sealing a man's wife to him for eternity, or wives, either.
In the "Times and Seasons," for October, 1844, is an article, presumably from its editor, in which more light is thrown upon the Spiritual Wife System.

We quote as follows:

Wo to the man, or men who will thus willfully lie to injure an innocent people. The law of the land and the rules of the church do not allow one man to have more than one wife alive at once, but if any man's wife die, he has a right to marry another, and to be sealed to both for eternity; to the living and to the dead! there is no law of God against it! This is all the spiritual wife system that was ever tolerated in the church, and they know it.

The above was introduced by the Reorganized church, on cross-examination of Wilford Woodruff, in an attempt to break down his testimony, relative to the presence of polygamy in the church at Nauvoo, prior to the death of Joseph Smith.

It thus appears that sealing was being married to a woman for eternity, or a continuation of the marriage covenant in the hereafter. As Taylor explained it in his editorial, if the woman to whom a man was "sealed," or spiritually wedded should die, he could marry a second wife, and be also sealed, or spiritually wedded to her. This would give him two wives in the spirit world, thus rendering him a polygamist in the world to come, if their theory was correct. Thus we see where the foundation was laid for actual polygamy, for it would be an easy matter to conclude, if God sanctioned a plurality of wives in heaven, he would make no objection to several here below.

According to the testimony of Mrs. Mellissa Lott Willes, given in the Temple Lot suit, page 347. Record, a woman could be married to one man for this world and to a different man for the next world. Or in other words, she could be the flesh-and-blood wife of one man, and the spiritual wife of another. Such a theory reduced to practice, could hardly fail in producing a condition certain to eventually result in polygamy.

What was true of the woman was likewise true of the man; he could be wedded to one woman for this world,
and to some other woman for the world to come. It is evident that the man who was married to one woman, and who should choose a different one for his spiritual companion, would do so because she had greater attractions than the woman then serving him as wife.

The act of choosing a different one for his spiritual wife, and her consent to the relation, would in itself be an acknowledgment on the part of both that there was a greater affinity between the spiritual couple than existed between the mortal pair. This mutual knowledge would ripen their minds for invidious comparisons, and would finally give birth to the desire to anticipate the joys of spiritual companionship by tasting some of their sweets, while yet in the flesh.

To minds in such disordered condition the suggestion would be most welcome, that inasmuch as the spiritual-wife system permitted a man to have two or more wives in eternity; and that many of the patriarchs were polygamists, it would be all right to have the spiritual wife along with the other. And if the "spiritual wife" were young and prepossessing, and willing, it no doubt assisted in hastening the conclusion.

Of course those advocating Sealing, and who attempted to perpetuate the marriage relation, eternally, were guilty of an innovation, and alike all other things not ordained of God, doomed to end in disaster.

CHAPTER II.

It is not to be supposed that men, whose minds had been trained to regard polygamy as unchristian, would enter upon its practice without feeling that they were justified; and it would be perfectly natural for them to wish their warrant to come through the channel theretofore employed by the Lord, in communicating his will to the church.
Thus those who were seeking divine justification turned to Joseph Smith.

Whether the doctrine of polygamy was received in a revelation, given July, 1843, or was not, it is certain that shortly after that date, and prior to the death of Joseph Smith, a revelation was in circulation at Nauvoo, and was introduced in the high council of the church, which would have been impossible of accomplishment, without the speedy exposure of the guilty parties, had not Joseph Smith been privy to it.

He held the sole right to receive revelations for the church, a fact certainly familiar to the members of the council; and with the opposition it encountered, it would appear incredible had he failed to learn of the representations made in the high council regarding his reputed authorship of the revelation.

If by any possible chain of circumstances, he failed to learn that his brother Hyrum was charged with appearing in the high council, and presenting a revelation sanctioning polygamy and

claiming that it had come through him, he was no longer without notice, when the Nauvoo "Expositor," a newspaper, printed the sworn charge, signed by Austin Cowles. Had he been innocent of any connection with the doctrine, the exposure of Cowles, or of his brother Hyrum should have followed. He attempted neither, according to the testimony of William Marks. The latter's statement shows that shortly after the newspaper exposure, Joseph Smith came to him and stated, that "This doctrine of polygamy, or spiritual-wife system that has been taught and practiced among us, will prove our destruction and overthrow." Marks also stated that Joseph became convinced that he had done wrong, and proposed going into the pulpit and denouncing the doctrine, in an effort to undo the mischief already done. The proof of these matters will follow in their proper order.

It is certain that under the law of the church, no officer would dare teach such a startling doctrine as polygamy
in defiance of Joseph Smith; neither would any man have been allowed to present and teach a revelation sanctioning polygamy, unless that revelation came through Joseph Smith, who by the law of the church had been appointed the sole person to receive revelations for a law unto the church. No abrogation nor relinquishment of this appointment had been made, therefore it was impossible for any person to have circulated and taught at the headquarters, a revelation teaching polygamy, without at least the sanction of Joseph Smith.

The actual reception of the revelation on polygamy, by whomsoever received, bears internal evidence that it was the result of a previously formed conclusion that God justified men of old in its practice. We reproduce the first paragraph, which easily bears out this assertion. It follows:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph, that as much as you have enquired at my hand to know and understand
During the trial of the Temple Lot suit, there was much testimony given tending to show that a revelation authorizing polygamy was privately circulated, and many witnesses were produced who swore positively that polygamy was taught at Nauvoo, during the lifetime of Joseph Smith.

Wilford Woodruff testified:

I undoubtedly know of its being taught in 1841 and 1842. I know that Joseph Smith taught it to certain individuals, but he did not teach it openly to the church. I cannot at this time recollect the exact dates, but it was quite a while before his death that he taught it. —P. 651, Record.

Mrs. Melissa Lott Willes, testified:

Yes sir, I said in my direct examination in answer to the questions from Mr. Hall, that the practice of plural marriage was taught me in Nauvoo, by Joseph Smith, and I also said I was married to Joseph Smith, September 27, 1843. —P. 652, Record.

Mrs. E. P. D. Young, testified:

At the time I married Brigham Young, in November, 1844, I was at the same time sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity. I was not married to Joseph Smith under the revelation on sealing, but was married to him under the revelation on plural marriage. —P. 652.

Rachel Thompson, and Lucy W. Kimball testified to the existence of polygamy at Nauvoo, during the lifetime of Joseph Smith.

The Reorganized Church attempts to destroy the force of this testimony by asserting that no children were born of plural marriages said to have taken place with Joseph Smith. We believe it was a son of Joseph Smith who wrote that his father had been accused of many evil things, but he had never heard him called a fool. We quite agree that he was far from being a fool; such being the case, he certainly would have exercised caution sufficient to avoid exposure, sure to follow the birth of a child to a plural wife. Joseph's brother, Hyrum offered to tell Ebenezer Robinson how to practice polygamy, and escape detection. If they could assist others to prevent evidence of its practice, no doubt they would be able to do as much for
themselves. That caution and secrecy were used, is shown by the testimony of numerous persons, and is well illustrated in a letter written March, 1844, by Hyrum Smith, and printed in the official church paper, the Times and Seasons. It appears a person had called on Hyrum Smith to learn whether he had been told the truth by several elders of the church who taught that men holding a certain priesthood in the church, could have as many wives as they pleased. Hyrum denied (of course) that any such doctrine was taught at Nauvoo, and also stated:

Neither has any elder any authority to preach any mysterious thing to any branch of the church, unless he has direct command from God to do so. Let the matter of the grand councils of heaven, and the making of gods, worlds and devils alone, for you are not called to teach any such doctrine.

He then proceeds to tell them why they must leave these things alone, and the reader will doubtless observe it was not on account of any fault in the doctrine, but because the elders and the people lacked the capacity to under understand the principles. Therefore, as he told them, these principles were to be kept locked in a “faithful breast,” till God should command their teaching.

For neither you nor the people are capacitated to understand any such principles, less so to teach them for when God commands men to teach such principles the saints will receive them: therefore beware what you teach, for the mysteries of God are not given to all men, and unto whom they are given, they are placed under restrictions to impart only such as God will command them and the residue is to be kept in a faithful breast, otherwise he will be brought under condemnation. * * * Now, therefore, I say unto you, you must cease preaching your miraculous things, and let the mysteries alone until bye and bye. —P. 474, Vol. 3, Times and Seasons.

This letter inadvertently reveals the fact that there were certain mysteries the elders should not preach even to church members, until “bye and bye.”

This purpose to cover up and hide matters not intended for the public, served the purpose by deceiving the unsuspecting, but those on the inside
knew of things not dreamed of by their neighbors. Affairs at Nauvoo, during the lifetime of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, were like a wheel within a wheel. The oaths of a secret society were used to hedge up the way of the too insistent one and the two leaders of the church were found in its lodge-room, binding themselves with others, by strange and secret oaths.

At the time Joseph and his brother were killed, William Marks was president of the Nauvoo local organization. After the assassination, he did not long remain in fellowship with those who seized the fallen reins of government. When the Reorganized church was in a formative state, in the fifties, he was found with them. Marks wrote a letter, in 1853, printed in "Zion's Harbinger, and Baneamy's Organ." Vol. 3, No. 7. This letter was practically reprinted in the first issue of the Herald, and reprinted entire in the Herald for Jan. 27, 1904. We quote from it.

Having been chosen and ordained chief Evangelical teacher of the schools of faith in Jehovah's Presbytery of Zion, it becomes my duty to say something by way of encouragement, and also by way of instruction to those who are placed under my care, and supervision, and first, by way of encouragement let me state what I know in reference to this work in which we are engaged, in order to do this I must of necessity refer to my experience in the church. I was a member of the church, some ten years before the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. I was appointed president of the stake in Kirtland Ohio, in 1837, and continued in that office at Kirtland until the Fall of 1838, when I was called by revelation to Far West, Mo; but before I arrived there, the Saints were ordered to leave the state; and when the stake was organized at Nauvoo, in the Fall of 1839, I was appointed president thereof and continued in that office up to the death of Joseph the prophet. I always believed the work was of divine origin, and that Joseph Smith was called of God to establish the Church among the Gentiles. During my administration in the church I saw and heard of many things that was practiced, and taught that I did not believe to be of God; but I continued to do and teach such principles as were plainly revealed, as the law of the church, for I thought that pure and holy principles only would have a tendency to benefit mankind. Therefore when the doc-
rine of polygamy was introduced into the church as a principle of exaltation, I took a
decided stand against it; which stand rendered me quite unpopular, with many of the
leading ones of the church. I was also a witness of the introduction (secretly) of a kingly
form of government, in which Joseph suffered himself to be ordained a king to reign
over the house of Israel forever; which I could not conceive to be in accordance with
the laws of the church, but I did not oppose this move, thinking it none of my business.

Joseph, however, became convinced before his death that he had done wrong; for
about three weeks before his death, I met him one morning in the street, and he said to
me, Bro. Marks, I have something to communicate to you, we retired to a by-place,
and sat down together, when he said: "We are a ruined people." I asked, how so? he
said, "This doctrine of polygamy, or Spiritual wife system, that has been taught and
practiced among us, will prove our destruction and overthrow. I have been deceived,"
said he, "in reference to its practice; it is wrong; it is a curse to mankind, and we shall
have to leave the United States soon, unless it can be put down, and its practice stopped
in the church. "Now," said he, "Bro. Marks, you have not received this doctrine, and how
glad I am. I want you to go into the high council, and I will have charges preferred a-
gainst all who practice this doctrine, and I want you to try them by the laws of the
church, and cut them off, if they will not repent, and cease the practice of this doctrine;
and," said he, "I will go into the stand, and preach against it with all my might, and in
this way we may rid the church of this damnable heresy."

But before this plan could be put into exec-
tion, the mob began to gather, and our
attention, necessarily, was directed to them.

I again met Joseph when he was about to
start for Carthage. He said to me, "Brother
Marks, I have become convinced since I last
saw you, that it is my duty to go to Carthage,
and deliver myself up as a lamb to the
slaughter."

I mentioned the circumstances of these
conversations with Joseph, to many of the
brethren, immediately after his death; but
the only effect it had was to raise a report that
Bro. Marks was about to apostatize; and my
statement of the conversation in reference
to the practice of polygamy, was pronounced
false by the Twelve, and disbelieved; but I
now testify that the above statements are
very true, and correct.

When I found that there was no chance to
rid the church of that abominable sin, as I
viewed it, I made arrangements to leave
Nauvoo, and I did so firmly believing that
the plans and designs of the great Jehovah,
In inspiring Joseph to bring forth the Book of Mormon, would yet be carried out in his own time, and in his own way.

It will be noted that Marks states he witnessed the introduction of polygamy into the church, as a principle of exaltation, and that Joseph Smith came to him, confessed he had been deceived in reference to its practice, and proposed to take such action as would undo the mischief already done. Marks also said when polygamy was introduced he took a decided stand against it; which made him quite “unpopular” with many of the leading men. As Joseph Smith was a leading man when Marks was losing popularity by opposing polygamy, what was his attitude? And what was it that kept Marks from beginning action against those practicing polygamy? It could have been nothing short of his knowledge that those practicing it had a revelation from Joseph as their license and were therefore beyond the reach of the common law of the church, whose aid he doubtless would have invoked.

had he not known of the impediment above mentioned. The Twelve regarded Joseph Smith as sanctioning polygamy, and would not accept Marks statement made immediately after Joseph’s death.

Even though the matters mentioned be given no weight, the fact remains a creditable witness of the Reorganized church testified Joseph Smith admitted that polygamy was taught and practiced in the church at Nauvoo.

President William Marks is not the only witness from among the Reorganized people who testifies concerning the connection of Joseph Smith with polygamy. In the first number of the "True Latter Day Saints Herald," (now the "Saints Herald") organ of the Reorganized church, is an article that admits Joseph Smith received the revelation on polygamy, and in which the writer quotes the 14th chapter of Ezekiel in explanation of how it happened. We quote:

All these instructions were sufficient for our guidance, but "men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put the stumbling
block of their iniquity before their face." This adulterous spirit had captivated their hearts, and they desired a license from God to lead away captive the fair daughters of his people, and in this state of mind they came to the prophet Joseph. Could the Lord do anything more or less than what Ezekial hath prophesied?

He then quotes the 8th to 11th verses of 14th Ezekial to show how the Lord would answer such persons, and also what would happen to the prophet who dare come before him on such an errand.

"And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." * * * * We have here the facts as they have transpired and as they will continue to transpire in relation to this subject. The death of the prophet is one fact that has been realized, although he abhorred and repented of this iniquity before his death. —Page 8.

It is said, "That which is admitted needs no proving." We have more evidence, however, at hand, and from the same Reorganized church paper, which we

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will present that all doubt may be set at rest. We now quote the words of Isaac Sheen, the first editor of the Herald.

The Salt Lake Apostles also excuse themselves by saying that Joseph Smith taught the spiritual-wife doctrine, but this excuse is as weak as their excuse concerning the ancient kings and patriarchs. Joseph Smith repented of his connection with this doctrine and said that it was of the devil. He caused the revelation on the subject to be burnt, and when he voluntarily came to Nauvoo and resigned himself in the arms of his enemies, he said he was going to Carthage to die. At that time he also said, that if it had not been for that accursed spiritual wife doctrine he would not have come to that. By his conduct at that time he proved the sincerity of his repentance, and of his profession as a prophet. If Abraham and Jacob, by repentance can obtain salvation and exaltation, so can Joseph Smith. —See page 27, Vol. 1, No. 1, Herald.

This letter was originally printed in the "Cincinnati Evening Post" for Oct. 9, 1852, and had stood for nearly eight years with its statement linking Joseph Smith with polygamy, and had it been an untrue statement, these men would not have republished the letter uncor-
rected in the Herald, for they were all friends to Joseph Smith, and interested in seeing him fairly pictured. Marks was a member of the Board of Publication of the Herald, knew the facts concerning the introduction of polygamy was competent to make any corrections needed, and would surely not have been a party to a mis-representation, had Sheen's letter, in reality been such. On the contrary the republication of Sheen's letter was, in effect, a re-affirmation and tacit approval of Mr. Sheen's statements and goes to show that Joseph Smith's connection with polygamy was well known, not denied, but freely acknowledged in the Reorganized church publications, but who sing a different tune since eye-witnesses like William Marks have fallen asleep. In addition to the testimony from these Reorganized witnesses, we have sworn statements from five (5) persons, relative to the teaching of polygamy, and a revelation on the subject, prior to the death of Joseph Smith.

Two of the persons, Ebenezer Robi-
The testimony produced thus far was given subsequent to the death of Joseph Smith. We will now present some affidavits made, printed and circulated in the home town of Joseph Smith, before his death. We quote from the "Nauvoo Expositor," printed in 1844.

**AFFIDAVITS.**

I hereby certify that Hyrum Smith did, (in his office,) read to me a certain written document, which he said was a revelation from God, he said that he was with Joseph when it was received. He afterwards gave me the document to read, and I took it to my house, and read it, and showed it to my wife, and returned it next day. The revelation (so called) authorized certain men to have more wives than one at a time, in this world and in the world to come. It said this was the law, and commanded Joseph to enter into the law.—And also that he should administer to others. Several other items were in the revelation, supporting the above doctrines.

WM. LAW.

State of Illinois, Hancock county:

I, Robert D. Foster, certify that the above certificate was sworn to before me, as true in substance, this fourth day of May, A. D. 1844.

ROBERT D. FOSTER, J. P.

I certify that I read the revelation referred to in the above affidavit of my husband, it sustained in strong terms the doctrine of more wives than one, at a time, in this world, and in the next; it authorized some to have to the number of ten, and set forth that those women who would not allow their husbands to have more wives than one should be under condemnation before God.

JANE LAW.

Sworn and subscribed before me this fourth day of May, A. D. 1844.

ROBERT D. FOSTER, J. P.

To all Whom it May Concern:

Forasmuch as the public mind has been much agitated by a course of procedure in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, by a number of persons declaring against certain doctrines and practices therein, (among whom I am one,) it is but meet that I should give my reasons, at least in part, as a cause that hath led me to declare myself. In the latter part of the summer, 1843, the Patriarch, Hyrum Smith, did in the High Council, of which I was a member, introduce what he said was a revelation given through the Prophet, that
the said Hyrum Smith did essay to read
the said revelation in the said Council,
that according to his reading there was
contained the following doctrines: 1st,
the sealing up of persons to eternal life,
against all sins, save that of shedding in-
ocent blood or of consenting thereto;
2nd, the doctrine of a plurality of wives,
or marrying virgins; that "David and Sol-
onmon had many wives," yet in this they
sinned not save in the matter of Uriah.
This revelation with other evidence, that
the aforesaid heresies were taught and
practiced in the Church; determined me
to leave the office of first counsellor to
the president of the Church at Nauvoo,
inasmuch as I dared not teach or admin-
ister such laws. And further deponent
said not.

AUSTIN COWLES,
State of Illinois, Hancock county, ss:
To all whom it may concern, I hereby
certify that the above certificate was
sworn and subscribed before me, this
fourth day of May, 1844.
ROBERT D. FOSTER, J. P.

To show that these people had really
seen the polygamy revelation, we pre-
sent extracts from it, showing the very
items they said were in it, and which Law
and Cowles swore Hyrum presented as a

revelation from God, given through his
brother, Joseph Smith.

Wm. Law swore, May 4, 1844.
The revelation, (so called) authorized cer-
tain men to have more wives than one at a

time, in this world and in the world to come.

The revelation reads:
And again as pertaining to the law of the
priesthood. If any man espouse a virgin
and desire to espouse another, and the first
give her consent and if he espouse the second
and they are virgins and have vowed to no
other man then is he justified. (Par 61.)

Mrs. Jane Law swore, May 4, 1844.
It [the revelation] authorized some to have
to the number of ten.

** And set forth that these women who
would not allow their husbands to have
more wives than one should be under con-
demnation before God.

The revelation reads:
And if he have ten virgins given unto him
by this law he cannot commit adultery for
they belong to him.

And again verily, verily I say unto you if
any man have a wife, who holds the key of
this power, and he teaches unto her the law
of my priesthood, as pertaining to these
things then shall she believe and administer
unto him, or she shall be destroyed saith the Lord your God. —See para. 62 and 64.

Wm. Law swore:
It said this was the law and commanded Joseph to enter into the law.

The revelation reads:
Go ye therefore and do the works of Abraham, and enter into my law [polygamy] and ye shall be saved. —Paragraph 32.

Austin Cowles swore, May 4, 1844,
In the latter part of the Summer of 1843, the patriarch Hyrum Smith, did in the high council, of which I was a member introduce what he said was a revelation given through the prophet; that the said Hyrum Smith did essay to read the said revelation in the said council, that according to his reading there was contained the following doctrines.
First, the sealing up of persons to eternal life, against all sins save that of shedding innocent blood, or of consenting thereto.

The revelation reads:
And again verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by word ** and it is sealed unto them by the holy spirit of promise *** it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time and through all eternity, and shall be of full force when they are out of the world.
And if ye abide in my covenant, and come...
elation produced by Young was not his fabrication, as claimed by the Reorganized church, but was the revelation used in the practice of polygamy during Joseph's lifetime, and so perfectly described by Cowles and Law. It seems dishonest to charge Brigham Young with the forgery of a revelation on Joseph Smith, after his death, when it is absolutely proven that just such a revelation as Brigham produced was circulated and taught nearly a year before Joseph died.

Unless one be steeped in prejudice we think it will be admitted we have shown that polygamy was taught and practiced in the church governed by Joseph Smith; that he had knowledge of it; that there was a revelation authorizing it; that he repented of his connection with the doctrine. To fasten this more firmly on the mind of the reader we will call attention to the following:

Polygamy Taught and Practiced.
When the doctrine of polygamy was introduced in the church as a principle of exaltation, I took a decided stand against it. — Wm. Marks, (Reorganized)

He [Hyrum Smith] came to our house in Nauvoo, Ills., in the year 1843, and taught the doctrine to myself and wife, more than once. — Ebenezer Robinson.

The death of the prophet is one fact that has been realized, although he abhorred and repented of this iniquity before his death. — Reorganized Saints Herald.

In addition to the above, W. Woodruff, Mrs. Willes, Young, Thompson and others swore positively that polygamy was taught and practiced prior to Joseph Smith's death.

That Joseph Smith knew it.

"We are a ruined people," I asked how so? he said, "This doctrine of polygamy, or Spiritual wife system, that has been taught among us will prove our destruction and overthrow." — Marks, (Reorganized.)

I knew that Joseph taught it to certain individuals. — Wilford Woodruff.

That there was a Revelation Authorizing it.

I hereby certify that Hyrum Smith did, (in his office) read to me a certain written document, which he said was a revelation from God. — Wm. Law.

I read the revelation referred to in above affidavit. It sustained, in strong terms, the
doctrine of more wives than one.—Jane Law.

Hyrum Smith did essay to read said revelation, it contained the doctrine of plurality of wives.—Austin Cowles.

He caused the revelation on the subject to be burned.—Sheen. (Reorganized)

Joseph Smith repented of his connection with the Doctrine.

Joseph Smith however, became convinced before his death that he had done wrong. —Wm. Marks.

Joseph Smith repented of his connection with this doctrine. * By his conduct at that time he proved the sincerity of his repentance. —Sheen.

He abhorred and repented of this iniquity before his death. —Reorganized Herald.

With this mass of testimony which shows polygamy was taught as a principle of exaltation; that there was a revelation on the subject, and that Joseph repented of his connection with the doctrine; that he caused the revelation on the subject to be burned, all furnished by Reorganized witnesses, not mention-

ing many other corroborating witnesses, there can be but one conclusion, and it is that Joseph was the author of the revelation on polygamy.

In view of these matters the action of the Eastern Colorado conference of the Reorganized church seems a careless handling of the truth. We quote a telegram sent by the conference to the U. S. Senate committee for the purpose of contradicting the testimony of Pres't Joseph F. Smith, of the Utah church.

It follows:

Brigham Young alone was responsible for the pernicious doctrine of polygamy, which was first given by him, in 1852, nearly nine years after the death of Joseph Smith who never had but one wife: all statements to the contrary are false. (See Mystic Bell for March 10, 1904.)

This telegram was signed by the officers of the conference, approved by the body, and displays either a lack of veracity, or of knowledge on the part of the senders. Incidentally it shows what value may be attached to the official utterances of a Reorganized body, who in its
acquired zeal to pose as purists is willing to trample the solemn declaration of one who was a veritable father to their church, to say nothing of other reputable witnesses, whose testimony to matters of which they had personal knowledge, is brazenly denied, by a body the majority of whose members were unborn when the events occurred, but whose happening they are so ready to dispute. As a final answer to the unjustifiable charge that the doctrine was first given in 1852, by Brigham Young, we quote the testimony of one more of their men who testified in the Temple Lot suit.

I think the doctrine of polygamy was taught privately before the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, but I don't know that it was taught. I can't say that it was taught before their death, but immediately after their death it was privately taught. See p. 217, Record.

CHAPTER III.

Among the different factions of the "Mormon" church, the Utah wing has been the most powerful and insistent advocate of the doctrine of polygamy. They claim to have practiced it as early as 1843, and some of them claim even earlier. The Strangites were found in the practice of polygamy, and Hickey, their witness in the Temple Lot suit, admitted its practice among them as early as 1847. The Whitmer following were not mixed up with polygamy as a doctrine of the church. The church under the leadership of Granville Hedrick was free from polygamy. The Reorganized church does not advocate polygamy, but the two branches which formed the nucleus of their organization, had been reared under leaders who taught polygamy.

Zenas H. Gurley, acting on the suggestion of a conference, in 1859 began writing a history of the "New Organization," as the Reorganization was then called. This history in due time made its
appearance in the "Herald." It being the product of a participator in the events narrated, and given publication in the official organ of the society portrayed, we have no hesitancy in presenting it as a faithful narrative.

Mr. Gurley starts the history by giving a sketch of events that occurred to him after being sent out as a missionary from the Strangites. It seems Gurley’s faith in Strang was waning, and he was at home, doing but little missionary labor. While at home one day, news was brought that his little daughter was at a neighbor’s house, speaking in tongues. He hastened to the child, and with others present united in asking God to designate the successor of Joseph Smith. After securing an answer stating the present Joseph Smith was the successor, Gurley continued:

It is proper here to state that the main body of the church lived from four to eight miles from us, and when they learned we had left Strang, they regarded us as apostates. However it was not long x x x until the whole church was made to know the truth of our position, and rejoice with unspeakable joy. The branch had been organized under Strang x x x. After singing I stated to the church what was the object of our meeting, and requested all who wished to renounce J. J. Strang, as prophet, seer, and revelator to the church, and acknowledge the seed of Joseph Smith in his stead, to come forth in the own due time of the Lord to manifest it by rising up. The entire congregation stood up. (Page 24, Vcl. 1, No. 1, Herald)

The branch here referred to was the "Yellow Stone," and was destined to occupy a large part in the foundation of the Reorganized church. This branch was formed some time in 1850, according to Gurley, its founder, who was sent out by Strang, an advocate of polygamy. In the second number of the Herald Gurley continued the history.

The church having publicly renounced Strang, and acknowledged the "Lineal rights" of the seed of Joseph, thought best as several of our brethren were living at Beloit and in its vicinity, to appoint a conference at that place. Accordingly the first conference held by us was at the Newark branch, on the 12th and 13th of June, A. D. 1852. I was appointed by the church here a dele-
gate to that conference. x x Conference was organized the 12th day of June, agreeable to previous appointment, choosing Jason W. Briggs to preside. x x x Conference adjourned to meet at the Yellow Stone branch, Wisc., the 8th of the next October following.

By hunting up the history of the Beloit branch, and adding it to the history of the Yellow Stone branch, we come close to having the history of those composing the foundation of the Reorganized church. This same Jason W. Briggs, who presided at the first conference, testified in the Temple Lot suit, and we quote from the Record.

I was an elder in Beloit. After the branch was organized, I was chosen presiding elder in the branch. x x x The branch as a body separated from the church in Nauvoo. After we cut loose from the leadership of Brigham Young, we accepted the leadership of James J. Strang, and remained in fellowship nominally with James J. Strang, until about 1850.

This shows the other church cooperating with the Strangite Yellow Stone branch was as bad off regarding its polygamous ancestry, as was Gurley's lit-

tle Strangite band. Indeed the latter appears to have the advantage some of Briggs' Beloit branch; for that was triple dyed in polygamy; once under Brigham Young, once under Wm. Smith, and once under Strang. Briggs testified, Record, pages 425—439:

After we left Strang, myself and most of the branch became associated with Wm. Smith's organization. I became associated with the Wm. Smith leadership about the first of the year 1851, and continued with him until the next Fall. My reasons for leaving him were very similar to my reasons for leaving Strang. I got to believe; and the branch there got to believe that he was teaching errors. He claimed, subsequent to my first acquaintance with him that it was his right to preside over the church, instead of his standing as a guardian or representative of the rightful heir; and another doctrine was that of polygamy.

Mr. Briggs throws some additional light on the doings of the 1852 conference, which he says, was called on the mutual advice and authority of Zenas H. Gurley, Henry Deem, Wm. Powell and myself. The point was raised at that conference and substantially decided, as I understood it,
that James J. Strang and Wm. Smith could ordain certain officers, could ordain elders, priests and teachers.

And so it appears, this Reorganized church, now charging Brigham Young with introducing polygamy in 1852, has quite a streak of polygamy in its own foundation, laid in 1852, by the union of the ex-Strangite bodies.

It must be admitted those men did well in quitting the foul nest of polygamy for the purpose of founding the Reorganized church, but they would have done much better had they not accepted as valid, ordinances to the priesthood, made by such arch-polygamists as Jas. J. Strang, and Wm. Smith. Briggs swore they did this, and by that act they let in a stream of tainted priesthood to mingle with whatever authority they might have possessed. It has gone on mixing and mingling its dark stream, until one is made to wonder where and how far it has flung its waters, and who has escaped its stain.

Independence, Mo. June, 7, 1904.