

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWSTHE MORMON PROBLEM—A
CRITICISM.

By Rev. John J. Cameron, M.A.

Attention has recently been drawn to the "Mormon Problem" by a letter which appeared in the columns of the Winnipeg Telegram by the Rev. Dr. Pringle, in which he deals with several matters affecting the well-being of the country. As compared with the Doukhobors, he writes: "We have much more reason to fear the Mormon. Naturalized or not, he is an alien. To him we are all Gentiles. His moral standing is low, and his settlement in our land is a blot upon our Western life." We fear the tendency of such remarks will be, to stir up religious strife, to arouse prejudice, to sow seeds of discord in communities, where hitherto peace and harmony have prevailed, and make future and further efforts for moral reform more difficult. A residence of nearly three years in the "Mormon Belt" as pastor of a Presbyterian (union) church has afforded us unique opportunities for forming a just estimate of the Mormon people. As a result of our observations we must say that while there may be some reason to fear Mormonism as a system, there is no reason why we should fear the Mormon. The proverbial "horns" which he was supposed to possess, disappear upon closer intercourse. He is better than his creed, and even his creed, as a result of his new environment, is losing some of its more repulsive features. It is moreover, only by a culpable abuse of language, that he can be regarded as an "alien," for the majority of the Mormon people have become naturalized and belong to the same race that we do, being largely of English, a few of Scottish birth or parentage, and mostly all of Anglo-Saxon origin. It is true he sometimes speaks of other Christian bodies as "Gentiles"—a term of reproach—first applied to all non-Mormons, in the offensive sense, by one of their so-called prophets. The term, however, is now seldom used, and really has no more animus than the term "Mormon," which we more frequently apply to them. The term as used by the Mormon, had its origin in the alleged cruel treatment the Mormons received at the hands of an Illinois mob whom they held responsible for the death of Joseph Smith, their founder, and whom they looked upon, no doubt unjustly, as representing the feeling of the Church and nation regarding that act. Their long isolation in Utah, whither they fled, and where they finally established themselves, and where their peculiar views frequently brought them into conflict with the U.S. Government has tended to intensify their prejudice against other Christian bodies. But such isolation is no longer possible in this age of railways, newspapers and mission churches, when, as never before, the most remote parts of the earth are being brought within whispering distance of each other. As a result of co-eduction and social and commercial intercourse with Christian people who are pouring in, misunderstandings are being removed, bigotry and prejudice are disappearing, and the Mormon people are now co-operating with others in all that makes for the social, moral and material development of the nation. To allege that they are a "blot upon our Western life," is no longer true, nor is it true that their "moral standing," whatever it has been in the past, is "low." Polygamous marriages, even in Utah, were are informed on the best authority, are rapidly declining, while in Southern Alberta they are practically unknown. There is a growing feeling in the more intelligent Mormon circles against polygamy. The "social evil" does not exist. Saloons are unknown,

bar-rooms bums are conspicuous by their absence, and the Mormons as a whole, may be justly characterized as a sober, industrious and law-abiding people. Upon their own confession, their social and moral status has improved by their coming to Canada. Nothing is to be gained by a policy of indiscriminate denunciation. The most effectual way to destroy error is to proclaim the truth. The experience of the past has shown that the surest way of reaching and influencing a people is not by antagonizing them, nor by offensively parading their shortcomings before the world, but by giving them credit for any effort they honestly put forth to improve their condition, by emphasizing the points we all hold in common, and using these as stepping stones to better mutual understanding, further improvement and more commanding influence. Any other course, we feel convinced, would only tend to widen the breach between different classes of the community, to foster a spirit of narrowness and exclusiveness which is already too prevalent, and to prevent that assimilation of the nations and peoples who enter our land, which is so essential to their unification, and to the complete and harmonious development of our social and national life.

Raymond, Alta.

SELFISHNESS THE CAUSE OF UN-
HAPPINESS.

These are the words of a noted preacher: "Why are so many marriages failures? The foundation of trouble is selfishness. It seems a strange reason, yet it is the fundamental reason. The man that is addicted to drink is a selfish man. He knows his wife's heart is breaking. He has taken her from a good family, she has made a sacrifice to marry him and he has promised to love her even to death. Therefore he should reason, 'If I love my wife I will do nothing to make her shed tears or bring sorrow to her heart.'

"Some men are 'grouchy.' They come home and don't say a word. They are cross, sullen, eat their supper in silence and read the paper. Something is wrong with them. Sometimes they go alone to the theatre, for they are selfish. If they want to go to the theatre they should take their wives and families.

"Let me advise you young people to marry young. Marry a good wife who can cook and do housework. Girls who can paint fancy work or dishes, but who can't cook a meal are ornaments. I care not whether the girl be rich or poor.

"Young man, make your wife your banker. Don't say you can't get married because you can't support her. You will have more money if you are married than if you remain single.

"Married life should be the happiest life. Understand, everyone has faults and peculiarities. Forget SELF, treat your wife lovingly; let your happiness be her happiness. Trials may come, but in the midst you will have an unseen hand support you.

"Gentlemen, you can do much to make home a reality. Try."

As an agricultural country France makes an excellent showing. Her crops yielded this year: Wheat 16,236,000 acres, 360,208,000 bushels; maize (mixed grain) 355,600 acres, 7,117,000 bushels; rye 3,068,000 acres, 60,580,000 bushels. The corresponding final figures for 1908 were: Wheat 16,221,000 acres, 316,687,000 bushels, maize 353,000 acres, 8,416,000 bushels; rye 3,075,000 acres, 51,692,000 bushels. France is a country in which peasant proprietorship shows its effect in the crop statistics.

A MODERN YOUNG MAN.

"Delta," in Lutheran Observer.

Daniel began right. "A good beginning a bad ending" has been often approved. It has been often the prophecy of a successful life and a glorious exit from the world. "As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined," would be nearer the truth. It is hard to get on the right road after having started on the wrong one. Those who get in the rut of wrong business or religious methods, usually twist off wheel or shaft before they get out. It takes bravery to face the cry of inconsistency or incompetency. At least nine-tenths of those succeeding in the world started well.

Daniel from childhood up had sound sense in religious matters. He was raised religiously and never got over it. He was a praying young man. Some think it unmanly in the young to be religious. Daniel did not. "A pious young man"—he cared nothing for that taunt. He carried religion into his business affairs and proved the possibility of leading a consistent Christian life and still prospering in worldly affairs. I am sure Daniel read his Bible—how else could he know what God did and not demand in the matter of eating and drinking? He meditated on Divine things while dispatching his duties as prime minister of Babylon.

Daniel in his house, Daniel in the store, Daniel on the street, Daniel behind the counter, Daniel on the ministers' bench, always had a window open toward Jerusalem. Many said he was foolish, old-fogey, etc., injuring his prospects for future preferment, etc. But Daniel means "Judge of God," and Daniel judged a God-fearing course would be no hindrance. The sequel showed he judged rightly. If a man cannot "shine in society" and maintain his religion, Daniel had no ambition whatever to be one of the "400." Begin piously. I pity the young man who puts off becoming religious till later in life. One can not be pious a moment too soon. You must be moral now, moral next week, next month and next year—all the way. Daniel's religion, too, was, as Matthew Arnold recommends, "touch-ed with emotion." That is, he found it necessary to believe with all his soul in the help—the indispensable help and salvation of the Almighty. If Daniel had not been thus religious—I will not say merely moral—at fifteen, I am safe in saying he would never have been any wise near the premiership of his adopted country.

Daniel was a model of principle and prudence, with ideas of his own: he did not when in Rome "always do as the Romans did." Everybody ate of the king's dainties if they could. Daniel never. He could not compromise his principles and partake of what had been first offered to idols. It took courage to refuse—more even than when much later in life, he refused to worship the image of Baal and was cast to the lions. Fortune was just beginning to smile. What! dash with one stroke of the hand the cup of jangling worldly success already lifted to his lips? Hard, but it was the test of the real character within him and Daniel was equal to it, and so worthy of further confidence. His principle, too, was enhanced by his prudence. He might have been all bluster and bluntly given offence, counting opposition and inviting inevitable defeat. No. He civilly asks for a test, all the while conscious of being in the right, yet not rash. He recognized there may be a wrong way of doing a right thing. "Dare to be a Daniel," to have Daniel's courage coupled with his court-sly. Bravery is not bragadocio.

Daniel is a fine specimen of decision and self-control. Not parley-