

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

UTAH TO CALIFORNIA.

MR. EDITOR,—There is one thing of interest to your city readers worthy of notice before dropping the Mormon Zion, where, in the brief period of seven months, I met with more novelties—ludicrous as well as tragic stories of family life, in polygamy, of Brigham Young and other leaders, than in all my observation or reading, in romance or fiction—truth stranger than fiction, enough to fill volumes, over and above the shoals of books or newspaper articles already written concerning the "prophet" and his harem—were it fit for publication.

The point alluded to is:

JOHN TAYLOR,

the present head of the Mormon Church and people, was "converted" in Toronto in 1836 while a youth, not long from England, that most fruitful field for the "missionaries" or agents of that system to corral their dupes from.

I may say also, that the impression over the country that

THE ANTI POLYGAMY LAW,

recently enacted, if enforced, will undermine Mormonism, is a delusion. Polygamy is the weakest plank in the system; its most vulnerable point, both in extending and defending it. That article of the creed will be dropped or ignored while the practice is continued underground; hence the system will be stronger than ever, and will flourish for centuries perhaps, as the Moslem has no law that can make lewd men or women chaste.

GENTILE POLYGAMY.

Talmage asserts that there are more polygamists in New York than in Utah, but without the cloak or pretence of religion to shield them. So it has been shown that in "cultured and aesthetic" Boston the proportion of the *demi-monde* to the population is greater than in Utah, counting even polygamous wives in that class. In Colorado and other mining regions the comparison is much more unfavourable still. From all learned or observed in four months on the Pacific coast, the state of matters is not much better in this line, especially in the cities. San Francisco has been painted as the wickedest city on the globe; but as regards open, brazen lewdness of both sexes, gambling dens universal, wholesale and miscellaneous fraud, vice and crime, Denver easily bears off the black palm of eminence, not to speak of Leadville, beside which Sodom was a model of decency. Denver has been compared with Paris in beauty, but it has not the shadow of claim to rivalry with it—not even in its vice is it like Paris. In the French capital everything is done with elegance. A Parisian will commit suicide and bow himself off the stage of life in a most polite, artistic mode, *i.e.*, "proper form," or aesthetic style. But a Denverite will mangle himself with his dirk, or shoot himself in the coarsest, butcher-like way—indeed very rude and vulgar, and quite out of harmony with the requirements of "good society." So with the murder of others, which is almost of daily occurrence there or in the "diggings" around.

THE TRIP

from Ogden, Utah, to Sacramento, Cal., by the Central Pacific Railway and over the Sierra Nevadas, is not quite what one expects from reports of tourists and guide-books, though it has much thrilling scenery, lofty snow-capped peaks, steep precipices, or abysmal ravines. As in over-passing the Rocky Mountains, the common notion that you pass up and over one single range or ridge is dispelled. The distance between the above points is 744 miles, of which perhaps 700 is in the mountains, never lower than 5,000 feet, and often near twice that, as range after range is crossed. Then again fifty or sixty miles of snowsheds at the highest points hide the scenery like a tunnel. At times one gets a glimpse through the open windows in the side of the sheds down into the chasms or up to the glistening peaks. But this is only tantalizing, as the train on the up grade has several engines and travels at the usual speed. The greatest wonder that strikes the tourist is, how a railway was ever built over such a stretch of mountains—so zigzag, circling around almost every quarter of a mile on the side of steep ledges, amid perpetual snow. Except the mining in the mountains and the pasturage in the plateaus, this whole distance, like

Wyoming, is a silent wilderness and barren, except patches of inferior timber. The size of the Union does not become real until after days and nights of travel the Pacific is reached at

SAN FRANCISCO.

Here the appearance of the city, the bay, the islands, forts and Golden Gate is not easily represented. The whole presents a beautiful panorama. But it has been so much talked of that one is somewhat disappointed. The city is fine, population 250,000. There are many squares and streets of superb warehouses, hotels and palatial residences, but it is placed upon a cluster of sand hills. There are few trees; the hills and mountains around are bald mounds of sand; chilly, blustering winds are almost continual. The wind in the East is a dead calm compared with these. On the coast there is much rain and fog. Hence the climate is unlike any other known, the summer being the coolest. It is unfavourable to invalids troubled with throat or chest diseases, or rheumatism, etc. The sudden changes, as well as the bleak winds and dust, make it disagreeable to the most robust at any season.

OAKLAND,

about four miles across the bay inward, is more sheltered and is therefore more popular as a place of residence. It is like Brooklyn to New York. The constant rush on the ferries reminds one of the New York crowds. Oakland is a winsome place, with its trees, shrubs and flowers in tropical variety and luxuriance in the streets, parks, and private grounds. The variety of plants, flowers, and trees in California is only equalled by the varied nationalities of the people. Every climate except the polar has its flora flourishing. Every nation or race—Negro, Mongolian, Indian, Spanish-Mexicans, and hybrids of all sorts are here.

THE CHINESE,

like the negroes in the South, are swarming the whole coast, and troubling the labouring classes of other nationalities very seriously. Indeed it is the question in politics, how to stop their coming, and to deal with those (75,000) already here. Capitalists, monopolies—as all Railway Companies are here—favour their importation. Eastern politicians, and some ministers and Christians in this State, also, are pro-Chinese. But the mass of the people—a vast majority—bitterly oppose them, and the universal cry is, "The Chinaman must go!" or "No admittance" to John. The city seems like a celestial city in "China-town," where everything is out and out oriental except the buildings.

As noted already, the city is not so strikingly handsome as expected. The streets are irregular, and so steep that the cable cars have to be used in many, though the horse cars are also in the more level.

However, the wholesale and other warehouses are unusually large and substantial, being built of brick and faced with stone, and clasped with iron, to make them earthquake proof. The buildings rate next after New York in size and number. In the matter of

HOTELS,

San Francisco is peerless. The Baldwin and Palace are the finest in the world. The latter cost \$7,000,000, and far surpasses any of the New York hotels. The Grand Union, at Saratoga—A. T. Stewart's—is the only one I have seen that would make a shadow beside this. There is a quadrangle, or open court, in the centre of the Palace for carriages to drive in, also two open spaces to give light, parallel on either side, extending almost from end to end. It covers a whole square, and is over six stories above ground. The first story is occupied with business of various kinds, the location being the focus of the city life and stir. It is moderate to estimate that it would take at least a dozen of the largest hotels in London, Paris, Rome, Dublin, or other Transatlantic cities to make this mammoth caravansary. The English or Canadian Parliament Houses would only be shanties alongside of it.

The whole make-up of the city, people,

SOCIETY,

usages, even dialect, is peculiar to California. The people like all else—are large-hearted, social and off handed. There is a vast amount of wealth, and considerable culture and refinement.

CLIMATE.

It was hard to realize that it was winter in December, January, and February, with roses blooming, oranges on the trees, and the weather like the finest

May elsewhere. The weather now is getting quite warm. On the 28th March the thermometer stood 88° in the shade 250 miles south of San Francisco, yet it did not feel uncomfortable.

RELIGION.

The Roman Catholic is the only Church that seems to have made any headway, or gained a solid foothold on the coast, or maintained any considerable influence over or hold on the people. All the Protestant sects are weak, numerically and every other way—loose in doctrine, discipline, worship, ethics, and in regard to the training of the young. Only a small fraction of the people in city, town, or country, attend any church regularly. Sunday is unknown in a Canadian sense of the term.

The State has recently passed a Sunday law, closing all places of business, which gives hope of a better state of things in the future. Education receives more attention than religion, but is not so much prized as in the Eastern States, or so universally disseminated in rural districts.

Intemperance prevails to an alarming extent, as in all the West on this side of the Missouri river; so also does Infidelity, Spiritualism, Free-love, easy divorce and the whole train of "isms" and evils that flourish where the Bible or its code of morals is ignored in the family and society.

Mr. Moody's work was the first ripple on the stagnant waters of society. Grand and effective as that was, yet it did not disturb the pool very deeply. However, a new life and impulse was given to the Christian workers, chiefly the Young Men's Christian Association, which has since done noble work.

MAJOR WHITTLE,

of Chicago, with his companions, Mr. and Mrs. McGranahan, who sing nearly as charmingly as Mr. Sankey, has been labouring with considerable success in the cities of the coast. Mr. Whittle is a rare Christian gentleman. He gave up, it is said, a salary of \$5,000 a year, to go forth with his family to preach the gospel in Britain and America, asking no salary, but depending on the Lord. He is able and winning in person, argument and eloquence. His Bible readings are a rich treat to all, but chiefly to zealous Christians already at home in the deeper spiritual scope of the Old and New Testaments.

These readings and his other gospel discourses compare favourably with Dr. Hall's or Dr. Taylor's best efforts. They are much more elaborate, scholarly and deep than Mr. Moody's addresses or Bible readings, yet the results in reaching sinners fall far short of that simple preacher, here or elsewhere. Is his power to edify Christians he approaches near Mr. Moody. But whence arises the marked difference in power with the masses? The answer to this question should be of no ordinary interest to your clerical readers, who, like Mr. Whittle, are giving every Sunday able, well-prepared and solid gospel sermons, and yet with what results? The reason is simple, God uses Moody more. But why? He has the power of the Holy Spirit with him more than others, because he has given himself wholly to the work, and does not depend on "fine sermons," as he himself puts it. He feels with Rutherford, Wm. C. Burns, McCheyne, Duncan Matheson, Spurgeon, etc., that it is not great talents, but holiness of life, that God uses in workers to reach others. As a result of this child-like surrender of himself, he is not only tenderly pure and burning in zeal, but sound and spiritual in doctrine—hence has no hobby, as "perfectionism" or other "ism," or one-sided view of truth, which hampers nearly all the other evangelists more or less. Nothing can be wider of the truth than the stale plea as the cause of his success, *viz.*, that he only reaps the fruit of what others had sown—their preaching; for, with the rarest exceptions, his converts are persons who have not attended church or heard a sermon for years, or not at all! Sabbath school instruction may have had indirect influence in some cases, but the practical little or none. There is a

MR. HOLLENBECK,

a reformed inebriate, labouring on the coast with success. He presents the gospel alone as the hope of the drunkard; there is none of the bogus work of those so-called reformers whose aim is to excite persons to sign a pledge and don a red ribbon.

Before closing, we would like to place a flower or drop a tear on the grave of our dear friend dear to every one who had the privilege of knowing him—