

troversy, which, however had now better be closed. So far as the Editor's personal attitude is concerned, he must confess that while he deems Professor Knight's position justified, he has not lost sympathy with and consideration for the religious conviction of people who cling to faith for faith's sake. But is not this position weak because it involves a despair of truth?—ED.]

THE POLYGAMY OF THE MORMONS.

The Mormon problem has again come broadly before the public and we extract the passages here published from a pamphlet* by George Seibel that appeared a few years ago.

"It will surprise many people to learn that the Book of Mormon in plainest terms forbids polygamy. Here are the words:

"Behold, thus saith the Lord, This people began to wax in iniquity; they understand not the Scriptures. . . . David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord. . . . Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have, save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; for I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women."

"This passage shows that a multiplicity of wives formed no part of the Prophet's original scheme. Indeed, in the early days of his career he found it difficult enough to support a single wife, much less a harem of forty, as is charged against him later. John Hyde, one of the few apostates who spoke with fairness of the church after seceding, said 'polygamy was not the result of Smith's policy, but of his passions.'

"There is ample evidence of flagrant immoralities practiced by Smith and others at Nauvoo, and perhaps earlier, which gradually transpired, and made necessary the 'special revelation' given in 1843, sanctioning and commanding a plurality of wives. For many years that revelation was kept secret, and the practice was publicly denied—partly because Illinois had laws to punish bigamy, chiefly in order that proselyting might not be hampered; but in 1852, Young at Salt Lake City officially proclaimed the doctrine, and ever since it has been a cardinal tenet of the church, which simultaneously made the startling discovery that 'Jesus had several wives, among them Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus.'

"Simple polygamy was not broad enough for these peculiar Saints, so they invented the doctrine of celestial ensequence, which makes Mormonism almost a revival of the obscene cult of Babylonian Mylitta, of which the practical application means sexual promiscuity under the sanction of the church. A man may wed as many 'spiritual' wives as he can persuade to enter into that relation with him—while they may at the same time be the temporal wives of other men. A woman may have any number of 'celestial' husbands—that is, she can be 'sealed' to some dead person, who has an earthly proxy, with all marital rights, save that the children born are credited to the Saint in heaven.

"The Saints defend polygamy by an elaborate line of argument, the

* *The Mormon Problem.* The story of the Latter-Day Saints, and an exposé of their Beliefs and Practices. George Seibel. Pittsburgh Printing Co. 1899.

salient points of which are as follows: 'If it is not wrong to have one wife, why should the possession of two, or a score, be stigmatized as a crime?' Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon had many wives and concubines, and it was accounted unto them for righteousness—nowhere in the Bible is there a word of disapproval. Besides, according to Mormon theology, all space is peopled with spirits awaiting incarnation; unless there is plural marriage these spirits can not all be supplied with human bodies to join the ranks of the saints on earth, and so attain to salvation. . . . Monogamy, it is further claimed, makes the one wife more truly the slave of her husband than are the many wives of the polygamist; it promotes licentiousness and fosters prostitution; finally, it exists in name only, for among the professedly monogamic communities practical polygamy is just as common as among the openly polygamous.'

"The institution of polygamy enabled the Mahometan tribes rapidly to overrun and conquer a vast stretch of territory; but within two centuries it had sapped the vigor of those races, and the colossal fabric of their empire slowly crumbled into ruins. No polygamous nation is at this day a factor in the world's progress.

"A people's greatness is built upon its homes, and the family is the nation in miniature. Home is a kingdom where love is the supreme law—the love of the one man for the one woman, of the one woman for the one man. From this close union of interests and affections, this loss of self and intermingling of two lives, there springs the highest, holiest ideals that human kind has ever known. Only from such homes, only from the nurture of such parents, only out of the sunshine of such ideals, can issue forth men and women great and strong to do the work of coming time. Without such men and women the Republic is doomed, and the Capitol, like the Alhambra, will be to coming ages only a melancholy wreck and relic of a ruined race."

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION AND MAN'S PLACE IN NATURE.

The editorial, "The Ascent of Man," has, upon the whole, been well received in theological circles. The theory of evolution, including the idea that man is kin to lower animals and has risen to his present high state through efforts of his own by the acquisition of mental and moral accomplishments, has been broadly accepted by the majority of religious minds and leading churchmen. The opposition to the theory of evolution which still prevails in many quarters is obviously based upon the idea that man ought to hold a place of his own in nature, and back of it lies the conception of a soul theory which has practically been abandoned by the psychologists.

We have received only one criticism of the article on "The Ascent of Man," and the argument is so characteristic of the situation that, with the permission of the writer, we take pleasure in publishing it.

Mr. Kepler Hoyt writes in behalf of his mother, Mrs. Hoyt, wife of John Wesley Hoyt, well known as the advocate of the establishment of a United States university at Washington. The scheme has been before Congress for some time and was approved by many, but it failed to be realized and is at present held in abeyance. Mrs. Hoyt is well known for her great interest in philosophical and religious subjects, and the letter characterizes not only her own conviction, but is typical of the attitude of a whole class of thoughtful religious people.