

EDITORIALS.

THE Rev. Robert Laird Collier delivered a discourse last Sunday evening in his church, at Chicago, on "The Social Evil." Every scheme looking forward to the regulation of this evil must, he said, end in failure. It must be suppressed. He dealt with the subject in plainness, and the suggestions which he made were very good, if they could be made practicable. Here lies the difficulty in labors of reform. Thoughtful, far-seeing men can perceive an evil and describe it; they can also suggest a cure. But who shall administer the remedies which they prescribe? Who has the power to grapple with popular sin and check its further growth? Single persons here and there have their attention aroused, and looking around them with scrutinizing eyes, they are shocked at what they behold. They cry out in alarm, and utter earnest protests against the further continuance of the frightful forms of sin which are dragging society down to ruin. But what can they do single-handed? They are comparatively powerless. They cannot organize a movement that will carry out the remedies which they propose; for they have not the influence, and there is not sufficient union among the people to make the best scheme of reform effective. The so-called Christian world is singularly helpless in this respect.

Speaking about the appetites and passions with which mankind are endowed, Mr. Collier says:

"And what do our youth know of these things, and how do they know them? The parents are mawkishly silent and falsely modest. The boys and girls, for the most part, grow up with no knowledge, save the vicious sort, picked up at school or on the streets. The pulpits and Sunday school teachers ignore the evil, and so our children are left to obscene publications, which purport to be written in the interest of purity, but usually tend to vice. So I insist that ignorance on this subject is the main suggestor and cause of social sin. Our physicians could do a better service for reform than any class of our professional or public citizens by writing well-worded tracts on this subject, and insisting, in their intercourse with youth, upon absolute purity as the only standard, and in every way tending to physical development, intellectual vigor, and moral integrity.

"It is furthermore in our human constitution to sink into depravity in proportion as the higher faculties and aspirations are inactive. 'Idleness is the devil's workshop.' The vicious youth usually are not among our hard working laborers and mechanics—their daily toil often overcomes the seductive influences of their surroundings in life, and they pass into a virtuous and useful manhood, marry, live happily, and make respectable citizens. But the faces full of lust you will find upon the idlers—the sons and daughters of the rich and pretentious, who grow up without employment and hard work, who are on the streets as loafers and drones, whose literature is the weekly picture papers and the lowest sort of sensational novels.

"I am surprised to meet well-dressed youths of both sexes on the streets after nightfall in familiar intercourse with each other, and boys who seem to have full range of the city before they enter their teens. Idleness and the unguarded life of our youth, next to ignorance, are the chief and cumulative causes of unchastity in our youth. I do not ignore the painful fact of prostitution; and when I contemplate it as a congress for gain, when I remember that it is a business prosecuted for a livelihood by women, I can only hope against hope and arm my own heart against despair. I charge society with much of this crime. I concede that a woman had better beg or starve than traffic in shame; that nothing can justify this wrong; yet I am sure that it is largely born of our conventional and false life. Shop girls and the women toiling on half-pay in manufactories and paper mills and book binderies, and employed as saleswomen in great mercantile establishments, because they can be procured for small remuneration, become bewitched of fashion, spend their income, and want more money to spend on dress and society, and give way to overtures from devilish men—the destroyers of virtue and heaven, but the inhabitants of the most sure hell of which we can know anything, and are led on from one degree of unchastity to another of shame until they end in brothels and untimely death. Another

aspect of fashionable life, in every way conducive of domestic alienation, and finally infidelity, is the conceded unwillingness of upper society ladies to abide the laws of nature in maternity, whereas every child in a household is another golden cord binding both mother and father to chastity, sobriety, and industry."

Where wives either destroy their children, or take measures to prevent their becoming mothers, or as Mr. Collier expresses it, "the unwillingness to abide the laws of nature in maternity," what can be expected from such a society? Can young people, with such examples before them, be kept pure and virtuous? Instead of such women as these being permitted to mix in society, they should be arrested, tried, and if found guilty, be imprisoned for life as murderers. That crime should be extirpated, and then, perhaps, "the social evil" might be controlled; but while infanticide and foeticide are practiced and winked at, and become every year more fashionable, it is useless to deplore the existence of other "social" crimes, or to attempt their eradication.

Mr. Collier urged that boys should not be allowed in the streets at night, and girls not be permitted to attend midnight parties and balls, and then less animalism would result. He would arrest lewd women and detain them for reformation, also known libertines, whether rich or poor, high or low, and confine them in reformatories. Excellent ideas; but, we should imagine, quite impracticable in Chicago. Arrest the men by all means. They deserve the most severe punishment; but it is not difficult to conceive of the consternation there would be in all circles of society, and especially in the upper ranks, if Mr. Collier should ever succeed in getting a majority to carry out his views. We should expect to hear of a general stampede of citizens from there.

UNDER the heading "Teaching Youth How to Sin," a San Francisco exchange has the following, which is a very bad showing for the morality of the people of that city:

"Can any better evidence be had of the demoralized state of society in San Francisco than that which is afforded by the eagerness with which her citizens purchase and read such publications as the 'Days' Doings,' the 'Sporting Times,' and other papers of that class? Thousands upon thousands of these obscene and nasty publications are sold every week—the high and low in the scale of society alike patronizing them. Talk about the evils of melodeons, 'dives' and beer-cellars! Why, these are inculcators of healthy morals compared with the blighting influence which such papers as we have named exert upon the minds of our sons and daughters. We hear that the grand jury intend having a stop put to the sale of these papers, but the report is almost too good to be true."

Our contemporary is sound on the subject he discusses, and no subject can be mooted more deserving the attention and interference of a grand jury. The whole welfare of society, temporal and spiritual, in time and eternity, depends upon virtue and morality; and no agent is more potent in destroying those great conservers of happiness than the reading of obscene and immoral publications. This is especially true with regard to the young; and unfortunately they are the class who, for want of experience and matured judgment, are the most addicted to such reading. A man or woman of mature years, possessing an average share of intelligence and judgment, will rarely give way to immoderate indulgence in this pernicious habit, and an occasional half hour over a novel does such a person no particular harm; but with the young it is very different. The perusal of one of the maudlin love stories or sensation novels, tens of thousands of which are issued from the cheap presses of the country, creates and intensifies the appetite for more food of the same kind, and unless under the care and control of those older and wiser than themselves, the appetite of the novel reader, like that of the votary to hashish, opium, or intoxicating stimulants, soon becomes uncontrollable, and anything and everything in the shape of a novel is eagerly read, and the more exciting and emotional the better. To such inexperienced readers *Days Doings*, *Police Gazette*, *My cries of London*, and other works of the same licentious and libidinous cast are tidbits, and are ever welcomed. Better, infinitely better, would it be for young folks if they never learned to read at all than, having learned, to indulge in such reading. It not only destroys the capabilities of the mind for all intellectual or studious pursuits,

but it creates a pruriency which is inimical to virtue—the very foundation and bulwark of all healthy, permanent society.

This subject is worthy of the utmost consideration from parents and grand juries everywhere; for the printing and circulation of obscene literature is the cause, at least indirectly, of a very large share of the licentiousness, dissipation, unfaithfulness to the marriage tie, and every species of crime which now so fearfully disgrace and corrode the vitals of modern society. Where the young are allowed indulgence in indiscriminate reading, they are being "taught to sin," with a vengeance.

The heads of families in Utah should give special attention to this subject. Here many families are very large, and hence the need of increased vigilance and circumspection. A taste for reading among children may be made an incalculable blessing to them; but in this, more even than in almost any other youthful pursuit or occupation, is needed the counsel and supervision of guardians and instructors. A taste for good and useful reading is as easily cultivated as the reverse; and when once developed is a source of profit, sterling pleasure and genuine delight. But it is with this as with all other of our mental and physical powers and capacities,—if developed normally and used righteously good only is the result; but that which is capable of conferring the greatest happiness when used legitimately, becomes a curse when abused.

A FEW days ago we published a notice in the local column, of the probability of a bill being passed in Congress, granting a pension to the soldiers of 1812. On the 14th ult., a bill on this subject was approved by the President of the United States, and as there are a few persons in this Territory who will be benefited by the passage of this bill we have no doubt they will peruse its provisions with great pleasure. They are as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to place on the pension roll the names of the surviving officers and enlisted and drafted men, including militia and volunteers, of the military and naval service of the United States, who served sixty days in the war with Great Britain of eighteen hundred and twelve, and were honorably discharged, and to such other officers and soldiers as may have been personally named in any resolution of Congress for any specific service in said war, although their term of service may have been less than sixty days, and who at no time, during the late rebellion against the authority of the United States, adhered to the cause of the enemies of the government, giving them aid and comfort, or exercise the functions of any office whatever under any authority or pretended authority in hostility to the United States, and who shall take and subscribe an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and the surviving widows of such officers and enlisted and drafted men: *Provided*, That such widows shall have been married, prior to the treaty of peace which terminated said war, to an officer, or enlisted or drafted man, who served as aforesaid in said war, and shall not have remarried.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That this act shall not apply to any person who is receiving a pension at the rate of eight dollars or more per month; nor to any person receiving a pension less than eight dollars per month, except for the difference between the pension now received and eight dollars per month. Pensions under this act shall be at the rate of eight dollars per month, except as herein provided when a person is receiving a pension of less than eight dollars per month, and shall be paid to the persons entitled thereto from and after the passage of this act for and during the term of their natural lives.

SEC. 3. And be it further enacted, That before the name of any person shall be placed upon the pension roll under this act, proof shall be made, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe, that the applicant is entitled to a pension under the provisions of this act; and any person who shall falsely take any oath required to be taken under the provisions of this act, shall be guilty of perjury; and the Secretary of the Interior shall cause to be stricken from the pension roll the name of any person when ever it shall appear, by proof satisfactory to him, that such name was put upon such roll through false or fraudulent representations as to the right of such person to a pension under the provisions of this act. The loss of a certificate of discharge shall not deprive the applicant of the benefits of this act, but other proof of services performed and of an honorable discharge, if satisfactory, shall be deemed sufficient.

SEC. 4. And be it further enacted, That the provisions of sections twelve and thirteen of an act entitled "An act supplementary to 'An act to grant pensions,' ap-

proved July four, eighteen hundred and sixty-four, and of sections two, three, and four of an act entitled "An act supplementary to several acts relating to pensions," approved June six, eighteen hundred and sixty-six, shall be applicable to the pensions granted by this act.

THE *Alta California* is endeavoring to awaken San Francisco to the comprehension of the fact that she is at the very crisis of her fate, and that if she has any desire to secure the leading commercial position on the Pacific, she must put forward every effort of which she is capable to get complete control of the current of trade now. The continental railroad has already deprived her of a considerable portion of the retail trade of the interior, and the continental railroads, which are being constructed or projected north or south of San Francisco will create strong competitors for the commerce of the Pacific. Green peas at Christmas and strawberries all the year round are satisfactory, the *Alta* admits, but it never heard of a commonwealth or a great commercial city being founded upon phenomenal growths of that description. The day may come when even green peas at Christmas, it says, may not be sufficient to save San Francisco. What it wants is an effort to secure the current of trade which is setting in that direction. It calculates there are not more than four or five years yet, during which San Francisco can not have any competition or rivalry, and it is time to work if there be any life at all thereabouts.

THE Washington *Star* speaking of the manufacture of salt from the waters of Great Salt Lake, as described in our columns a short time since, says:

"From this favorable beginning much may be expected in the future. The source of supply is both rich and inexhaustible, and when to these advantages are added the experience which must come with time, the well-known industry and economy of the Mormon people, and a properly adjusted freight tariff, it is not too much to predict that the vast saline deposit known as Great Salt Lake may yet become a source of great wealth to the people surrounding it; and it will be among the curiosities of history if the spot once known as a barren desert, should become—as it seems in a fair way to become—through her salt lake, her mineral resources, and her agricultural capacity, one of the richest States of the Union. That it will some day be the great pleasure resort of the continent we do not doubt."

GRADY, a convicted murderer, was sentenced at Washington, D. C., to be hanged on the 24th ult., but President Grant gave him a respite until the 17th inst. Grady believes that his sentence will be commuted, the Washington *Star* says, although he continues the use of his prayer-book, to be prepared if, as he says, "the worst comes to the worst."

THE first number of the *Golden Age*, the new paper published by Theodore Tilton, New York, has reached us. The editor writes on the margin of the paper: "If you like this paper, please say so; or if you don't like it, say so." Being so frankly appealed to we take pleasure in replying that we like it. It is beautifully printed upon good paper in clear, new type, wide columns, and has an attractive appearance. The prospectus is a liberal one. It is stated at the head of the editorial columns that "This journal is devoted to the free discussion of all living questions in church, state, society, literature, art, and moral reform."

As an evidence of how liberal his paper will be the editor says:

"The *Golden Age* will invite Dr. Brownson to explain why he is a Roman Catholic, and Dr. Bellows to answer why he is a Unitarian; it will offer Mr. Greeley an opportunity to argue as a Protectionist, and Mr. Bryant to rejoin as a Free-Trader; it will give Horace Bushnell a chance to express himself against Female Suffrage, and Mrs. Cady Stanton the privilege of claiming the enfranchisement of her sex."

He does not mention whether "Mormons" shall have equal privileges in his columns, or not; but we should imagine that with so broad a platform he can afford a little room for a Latter-day Saint.

WHAT can be the influence at work just now unfavorable to Governors? They seem to have a streak of bad luck. No less than three Governors—"His Excellency" Governor Holden, of North Carolina, "His Excellency" Governor Clayton, of Arkansas and "His Excellency" Governor Butler, of Nebraska—have been impeached, and are now being tried or soon will be.