

ment of joy and profit to many a district now a stranger to handsome floral plots.

"AMERICA."

The subjoined contribution to the discussion of the origin of America's anthem will be read with interest. The writer, as will be seen, corroborates in every detail the views recently expressed by the NEWS on the subject:

Having noticed an article in your journal discussing the origin of the American national anthem, I was impressed with the thought that perhaps some additional facts which I am in possession of might not be uninteresting to your many readers. In a recent interview the composer, the late Rev. Dr. S. J. Smith related how he came to write "America." He said: "In February, 1832, I was poring over a German book of patriotic songs which Lowell of Boston had sent me to translate, when I came upon one with a tune of great majesty. I hummed it over and was struck with the ease with which the accompanying German words fell into its music. I saw it was a patriotic song, and while I was thinking of translating it I felt an impulse to write an American patriotic hymn; I reached my hand for a bit of waste paper and taking my quill pen wrote the four verses in half an hour.

"I sent it with some translations of the German songs to Lowell Mason, and the next I knew of it, I was told it had been sung by the Sunday school children at Park Street church, Boston, at the following Fourth of July celebration."

Dr. Lowell Mason was a great celebrity of the divine art in those days, being conductor of the Boston academy of music and composer of many sacred hymns and anthems still extant and now considered as standard in many collections of music.

Your correspondent remembers perfectly well the occasion when "America" was first sung as he was one of the Sunday school pupils of one of the Boston Congregational churches (namely, the Essex street church) who united with the others of that denomination in celebrating Independence Day in Park street church, situated contiguous to the historic "Boston Commons."

The journals of that city described the effect as electrifying to the immense audience who was present and listened to the patriotic strains.

GEORGE HAMLIN.

WOMEN AND PROHIBITION.

The question of the probable influence of women on public morals as exercised through the ballot has received an illustration in Norway recently. Not long ago the attention of Europe and America was called to the way in which the liquor traffic is regulated in that country, and a great many became quite enthusiastic over the so-called Gothenburg system.

Since then the women in Norway have been given a chance to express their views on the liquor question, and since they for years have been in a position to study the practical results of the system on their husbands and brothers, their verdict is not to be set aside by theoretical arguments. The first chance the women had to make themselves heard with effect was in the little city of Gjøvik. There on election day they rallied en masse around the polls and voted against the system. In another city, Arendal,

the result was the same. The third place where the women pronounced against the liquor traffic was at Risør. And it is supposed that other cities will follow the example, when their turn comes.

The women of Norway have pronounced against the liquor traffic even when regulated in a manner that many consider next to perfect. They believe that it is an evil, and not even a necessary one, and they do not hesitate to take a prohibitory view of the matter.

There is one city in which for years no sale of liquor as a beverage has been allowed and that is Haugesund. This city has 6,200 inhabitants, and it is surrounded by populous parishes of which it forms the commercial center. Moreover, it is the gathering place at regular intervals of thousands of fishermen, most of them young people. But not a drop of liquor is to be had in town. A correspondent of a Christiania paper in a letter reproduced in the London Times, asserts that nobody misses it. Beer is sold under certain restrictions, but sobriety is so general that an intoxicated person is looked upon as a prodigy. "A worthier and more industrious class of working men," the correspondent adds, "is not to be found in all Norway than that of Haugesund, and, besides, they have shown a rare faculty of pulling through times of unemployment. I consider myself entitled to tell all who labor for the abolishing of the sale of spirits that Haugesund has not discovered any bad consequences of its non-existence, but only good ones."

No wonder that these facts are considered an object lesson by all who believe in prohibition and that the women of Norway should vote in accordance with these teachings!

THE MESSAGE.

President Cleveland's remarks to the new Congress is a very lengthy document. Like Mercurio's wound, it may not have the depth of a well nor the width of a barn-door, but 'twill serve. To the promise made in the opening paragraph, the writer of the message adheres with due exactness: foreign affairs and national finance are the only subjects to which he pays other than incidental attention.

No doubt the utter absence of anything like jingolems from the former part of the document will prove a disappointment in many quarters, and yet in the only case where he appears required to speak upon the matter of European intermeddling with affairs on the American continent, he reaffirms the Monroe doctrine with reasonable emphasis though without any of the bluster that some of his critics think necessary. Without being entangled either by Mr. Cleveland's personality or his policy, we are nevertheless disposed to accord to his treatment of foreign affairs generally the credit of honor, patriotism and a just conception of the best American traditions. These portions of his message confirm this estimate of his policy; for the record proves that he has shown firmness without fire-eating, and vigor unsullied by vacillation.

Whatever disappointment, however, there may be with reference to such parts of his address, none will be found with his remarks on the domestic financial situation. He has always been a pronounced anti-silver man, and in defining anew his views, his attitude, and his policy, he now goes far beyond any previous statement, and makes an argument more complete and stalwart we think than any we have seen from that side of the question. We of the West may deem his logic faulty and his conclusions fallacious; but he presents them with a clearness seldom seen in a dispute so complex, and with a terseness and felicity of phrase that cannot but illumine the dry statuteness of the theme. As the bearing of all sides of a question is necessary to its honest comprehension, this part of the message will commend itself in particular to the reader, as probably the best exposition of the monometallist doctrine and the best defense of its policy that current literature affords.

So much for what the President says. What he does not say would fill quite a book. He makes only passing allusion to the tariff policy of the two parties, merely hints at the restriction of immigration, and passes in entire silence the Nicaragua canal and other national questions. Naturally enough, he does not become confidential with a Congress politically antagonistic to himself, on the question of a third term for a President; and save in the matter of the consular service he says nothing about civil service reform. But there is plenty of time for special messages on these and all other proper subjects of discussion, and he is hardly the man to let any necessary occasion pass by unused. He may be ponderous in frame and mentality, but he is agile in letter-writing; and though at times prolix, he is always worth reading, and his messages mostly will find a place in history.

SEES THE POINT.

The last issue of The Return official organ of the followers of David Whitmer, published at Davis City, Iowa, discusses the decision of the United States court of appeals in Missouri, by which the Hedrickite church retains legal possession of the Temple lot in Independence, Jackson county, Missouri. It refers to the suit of the Reorganized church as "an unjust suit from the first," and goes on to say:

Beside, it is obvious that the Josephites care as much, or more, for a decision from the court, to the effect that they are the legitimate successors of the Church in 1833, as they do for the lot. This claim is too weak to stand for a moment if contested by the people of Salt Lake, where that Church with all its official quorums and records went in 1846. Granting they were apostates, the apostasy occurred while the original leader yet lived, and does not invalidate their succession in a temporal sense; and it is childish to attempt to get decisions of temporal judges on their spiritual acceptability. The Lord only can decide that, and we must commend the Utah Church to ignoring such efforts.