

## EDITORIALS.

## THE CONGREGATIONAL CREED.

AN attempt has been made by a number of Congregational ministers to effect the formulation of a written creed, subscription to which shall be necessary to an acknowledged membership in the body of Congregationalism. The evident intention of the movement was the exclusion of some churches and preachers from fellowship, now sailing under Congregational colors. But the doctrines and principles of those who claim to belong to this denomination are rather difficult of arrangement. Indeed, they are impossible of crystallization into a creed, because many of them are discordant and unblendable. The genius of Congregational church government is almost inconsistent with the formation of a set form of faith. It gives the utmost latitude to each local body of worshippers. So far is this extended that in some parts of the world Congregationalists are popularly known as "Independents."

But the need of a creed for the times is called for by the changes that have taken place in the views of both preachers and people, since the promulgation of the dogmas laid down in the Westminster catechism, and the rejection by most of them of the extreme views enunciated by Calvin and his disciples. The creeds of men need continual change. They are full of errors, and time exposes them. The simple truth of God stands untouched by the force of time and needs no reconstruction.

The *Christian Union* of the 11th inst., reprints a profession of faith published by a body of eminent Congregationalists who assembled in Boston in 1865, which is sufficiently broad to take in most professing Christians, and we append it for the consideration of our readers:

"Recognizing the unity of the Church of Christ in all the world, and knowing that we are but one branch of Christ's people, while adhering to our peculiar faith and order, we extend to all believers the hand of Christian fellowship, upon the basis of those great fundamental truths in which all Christians should agree.

"With them we confess our faith in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, (the only living and true God); in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, who is exalted to be our Redeemer and King; and in the Holy Comforter, who is present in the Church to regenerate and sanctify the soul.

"With the whole church we confess the common sinfulness and ruin of our race, and acknowledge that it is only through the work accomplished by the life and expiatory death of Christ that believers in him are justified before God, receive the remission of sins, and, through the presence and grace of the Holy Comforter, are delivered from the power of sin and perfected in holiness.

"We believe also in the organized and visible church, in the ministry of the word, in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, in the resurrection of the body, and in the final judgment, the issues of which are eternal life and everlasting punishment.

"We receive these truths on the testimony of God, given through prophets and apostles, and in the life, the miracles, the death, the resurrection of his son, our divine Redeemer—a testimony preserved for the Church in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which were composed by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

"Affirming now our belief that those who thus hold 'one faith, one Lord, one baptism,' together constitute the one Catholic Church, the several households of which, though called by different names, are the one body of Christ, and that these members of his body are sacredly bound to keep 'the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,' we declare that we will co-operate with all who hold these truths. With them we will carry the gospel into every part of this land, and with them we will go into all the world and 'preach the gospel to every creature.' May he to whom 'all

power is given in heaven and earth' fulfill the promise which is all our hope: 'Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' Amen."

There are many points in the foregoing, about which various conflicting views are held, and believers in them, while perfectly willing to subscribe to their correctness, may yet interpret them according to their peculiar ideas. The intention of the framers of the document was no doubt to embrace as large a number of professing Christians as possible within the arms of the Church, and therefore were thus liberal in their formula. We call the attention of our friends to the principles therein enunciated, and to the fact that according to the first section of this declaration, Congregationalists who accept it as their creed cannot consistently refuse to recognize, as Christians the body of believers composing the much opposed and berated Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

## "STAR"-LIGHT.

The *Millennial Star* of June 2nd contains many items of interest, from which we collate the following:

"The cheerful character of the reports coming in from the several conferences and missions is, to us, a source of much pleasure. Baptisms are increasing in frequency, and the elders, in their communications, give evidence of cheerfulness and faith, incited by the encouraging character of the prospects of the future."

"We learn from Brother Roberts, President of the Manchester Branch, that, permission having been obtained to place the Church publications in the Central Reference Library, of that city, the Saints there have contributed sufficient to procure the necessary books for that purpose. The Branch also regularly supplies a copy each of the *Star* to five different libraries in Manchester. By this means the written word will reach a great many people who would probably not otherwise peruse it."

"On Monday, May 5th, Elder Orson Pratt received a letter from President John Taylor, informing him that the council of the Twelve Apostles had decided that he should remain in England and obtain electro-plates for a new edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. As the getting out of the references for this standard work involves considerable labor, and it was the desire of the Twelve that Elder Pratt should return home as early as convenient and practicable, President Taylor advised him to summon to his aid what help he might require. Elder Nicholson was named, as one to give what time he could spare from his other labors, which he is consequently doing. In addition, Elders Hugh Findlay, John Rider and Moroni Snow were called on to help, and are now and have been for some time engaged, under the supervision of Elder Pratt, aiding the latter in getting out the references, and he is, therefore, with this assistance, progressing very rapidly with this preparatory work for the proposed new edition.

As soon as the work is sufficiently advanced to warrant it, Elder Pratt, accompanied by Elder Jos. Bull, who will assist him, will proceed to London, where the type will be set and the electro-plates obtained. The size of the type will be similar to that used for the latest American edition."

"We have received a letter from President George Crane, Dated May 29, in which he informs us that he recently baptized five persons, four of whom are new members. He likewise enclosed with his communication, a letter addressed to him from Elder Peter Reid. The latter is actively engaged in the discharge of his duties, traveling, visiting and preaching. He lately baptized several members of a family who formerly belonged to the church, and one person among them who was not previously a member.

A letter to Elder Crane from Brother Thomas Mitchell, of Stockton-on-Tees, dated May 27, stated that five persons had just been baptized there, and two more were expected to be added within a few days."

Elder Thomas Child writes from Leeds Conference, May 23d:

"I baptized four at Clayton a short time ago, and three more have been added at other places. There is a prospect of a few more soon."

Elder Geo. H. Taylor, in a private letter from London, May 30th, to one of the brethren in the office, says:

"I am having a very good time, being out nearly every night at meetings, or visiting persons who are investigating, of which class there is quite a number. We baptized five adult persons and seven children last week, and we have three more grown people to baptize next week. I am greatly blessed in my speaking, and wonder sometimes where it comes from."

Our friends in Utah should pay particular attention to the following:

"Considerable difficulty is caused in this office through the Saints in Utah remitting money, for their friends, by post office orders made payable to William Budge, without an accompanying notification specifying for whose benefit the money is intended. The orders are sent by the officers of the post office, and therefore cannot be accompanied by the necessary advice. Separate notifications in letters are not sufficient to obviate the difficulty, as there are no names on the orders, and we frequently receive quite a number of them together. In consequence, we have sometimes to retain orders here a long time, until further advised. On this account, parties for whom the remittances are intended are occasionally delayed in their departure for Utah."

When money is sent through this Office, we request that it be done by means of Church drafts, which can be obtained by forwarding the money to the office of President John Taylor, Salt Lake City. When it is the desire of the remitter that the money is to be used for 'emigration only,' this should be specified on the draft.

We receive a large number of letters asking us to furnish information of various kinds of a personal character. To insure replies we suggest that persons making the inquiries enclose sufficient to cover the cost of postage."

## THE WORK IN GERMANY.

THE following letter to Elder Geo. Reynolds has been received from Elder Henry Flamm, presiding over the Swiss and German mission. It is dated 33 Postgasse, Bern, May 27, 1879. We have omitted the preliminary sentences, but publish the letter almost entire, that our friends here may learn of the feelings of the brethren and the progress of the work on the European continent:

"I think it has come to a fine point when 'Christian judges' (?) consider the laws of a corrupt nation, got up by unprincipled statesmen and shoddy lawyers, that they might torment and harass the best men living upon God's footstool. I frequently wonder what puny men expect to accomplish by making war with the Almighty? When I read your letter and the *DESERET NEWS*—which is always received with a hearty welcome at this place—concerning the treatment they gave to our worthy and so much tried and staunch friend, brother and hearty supporter of the cause of God, D. H. Wells, strange feelings came over me. I felt to ask myself: 'How long, oh Lord! will thou permit the ungodly to persecute thy servants?' Sympathy mingled with a feeling of disgust took possession of my soul. Sympathy for my brethren, who for the cause of truth have to endure all the abuse of the vilest of men. Disgust for a set of officers, who, placed to execute the laws of a republic, an asylum for all religious worshippers, as guaranteed under that God-inspired instrument, the constitution of the United States of America, cater to the whims and notions of rotten politicians and carpetbaggers."

I am laboring for the spread of the cause in these lands, and a short time ago I applied for the privilege of posting up handbills to advertise our meetings and invite all men to investigate our principles, which I succeeded in getting here in Bern, and much good has grown out of it. And as we had a good start in Bavaria on the Rhine, where Elder Theurer labors, I sent him a copy of our bills, with a request to do likewise. The authorities where our branch is have always behaved very gentlemanly towards us heretofore, which, of course, strengthened my confidence in them. Now when this bill was presented to them, they felt themselves incompetent to give the grant, and sent to a higher court to get the mind of that body. An answer was returned, stating that they wanted all of our books sent to them for investigation, and until they could give a decision all of our meetings at that place either public or private must cease. The books are now being forwarded and the police commissioner, acting the gentleman, has sent a request of his own to expedite the affair and if possible to give us the privilege asked for, and if not to let us know the decision as soon as possible. The Saints feel 'bad' to be deprived of their meetings for a season, but my convictions is, that much good will result therefrom, and a larger field for the Elders to labor in will be the crowning result. The commissioner told the brethren that no doubt they would have to appear before court to give an account of themselves, which they are but too glad to do.

In connection with this, the press is not idle, and howling priests, feeling that their craft is in danger, are doing their best to stop the progress of the work; but notwithstanding all the efforts of zealous and ungodly persons, the work of God is prospering and growing, as a testimony of which, we have the privilege of accompanying honest souls to the water's edge occasionally.

I have paid a visit to my relatives in Wartemberg lately, held several well attended meetings with them and opened a field for some of the missionaries. As my labors are in the office principally, and my time to return is high at hand, I thank God, that at least a prospect is ahead in a new part of this mission, where I think many will yet be made glad through the glorious message brought to earth again from heaven in this our day.

We have had a visit lately from President Budge, who held conferences throughout the mission, and we had a feast of fat things. He expressed his entire satisfaction concerning the state of this mission and the management thereof.

One more more item, although last, but not least, I must allude to, and that is the praiseworthy action of our German Saints in Utah in sending of their substance to aid the poor to emigrate from these lands. Many hearts are made light and new hope is infused into some that soon their turn for deliverance is at hand. Many are the prayers that ascend on their behalf.

I shall leave Liverpool on my return home on June 28th. Shall be glad to meet my friends in Salt Lake City and Utah in general."

## THE COURSE OF FOLLY COULD NO FURTHER GO.

AT a meeting of the Historical Society of Washington County, Pennsylvania, on the 6th inst., among other resolutions adopted was the annexed:

"Resolved that a committee of ten be appointed to take action to perpetuate the memory of Solomon Spaulding, the author of the *Mormon Bible*, of which A. M. Gow shall be chairman, the remaining members to be appointed by the executive committee."

The minutes of the meeting are published in the *Review and Examiner* of Washington, Pennsylvania, of June 11th, which makes the following comments:

"As will be seen by the minutes elsewhere, the Historical Society has appointed a committee to take measures to perpetuate the memory of Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a citizen of this county and the author of the so-called Bible of the *Mormons*. The collection of marvelous statements which make up that wonderful piece of sacred fiction was written, it is generally believed by the above gentleman as a sort of intellectual gymnastic exercise, and to pass away the idle hours, never thinking it would become the standard of faith for a people gathered from all parts of the world controlling one of the richest territories belonging to the United States. The work was never printed, but the manuscript was left to careless hands as a thing of no

value. How Joe Smith, the high priest of Mormonism, got possession of it, we have not heard. It is said that it can be clearly proven that the story which Solomon Spaulding, the Washington county preacher, wrote for the substance of the same that Joe Smith, the apostle of polygamy, palmed off for gospel. The work of this committee will be, in addition to making this fact well understood beyond quibble, to devise some permanent memorial of the obscure country preacher, who, however unwittingly, shaped the foundation stones for the religion of Utah."

Of all the follies of memorial monument building fanatics, is the hugest and most absurd the first place, the story that defunct religious romancers wrote anything like the manuscript of which he was the reputed author, rests upon the most substantial of foundations. It is from the evidence, that such a person as Solomon Spaulding, and that he wrote such a kind of novel concerning an imaginary people, of idolatrous character, who settled Ancient America. By the nature and character of the work, such contrary reports have been given, it is impossible to decide with certainty. Whatever may have been it is beyond question, with those who have investigated the matter as closely as possible in the absence of the manuscript, that it had no connection with or likeness to the Book of Mormon in any manner whatever. Take all the statements that have been made on this matter, by those who desire to foist the authorship of the Book of Mormon upon the "intellectual gymnast," separate and apart from their illogical deductions and gratuitous assumptions, and there is not a single link between that pious novel and the Prophet Joseph Smith, nor any similarity between the described features of his alleged production and the volume translated from sacred plates.

The nonsense, then, of an attempt to perpetuate the memory of Spaulding as "the author of the so-called Mormon Bible" is ludicrous in the extreme, and if members of the Historical Society of a Pennsylvania county can find anything better to employ their time than in such a waste with an object, to say the least, so doubtful a character, they are better be provided with some humming tops and marbles, or be initiated into the mysteries of "Simon says thumbs up," where they beguile the hours when not engaged in historical debate.

But supposing the surmises of the jumpers at conclusions who connect the "Manuscript Found" which by the by nobody has—except the Book of Mormon to correct, what claim has the author to public consideration, and should his memory be perpetuated? The only remarkable thing reported of him is that he, a preacher of the gospel, wrote a work of fiction "just for fun," and could do nothing more attractive where he was while away his leisure time than to manufacture an imposture which he tried, in vain, to put for the holy purpose of making money. This is a nice example offer to succeeding generations, is a splendid specimen of the American ecclesiast! He forms a singular subject for a monument memorial! Has that county historical society gone crazy? Or is it composed of a number of Pennsylvania Pickwicks, with less than mental capacity of the famous quarians, who added their brains over the mystic letters were correctly deciphered, spelt Stubbs, his mark?"

We will offer a suggestion to society which appears so anxious to keep the name and fame of a secure story-making country before the world. That is, the means to be appropriated to proposed memorial in the publication of his alleged work. Send the Book of Mormon to all nations. Publish it in the leading languages of modern times. Let the world read what he wrote if he is the author, or if any sane person of ordinary intellect who carefully peruses the book comes to the conclusion that it was concocted in deception and fabricated for gain, let Spaulding have all the glory which the Washington County Historical Society desire to cover him with.

We will venture the guess that none of its members ever read the whole of the book, and that the *Review and Examiner* editor