

EDITORIALS.

EXCOMMUNICATION.

IN a revelation, given May, 1831, the Lord says: "Woe unto them who are cut off my church, for the same are overcome of the world; wherefore let every man beware lest he do that which is not in truth and righteousness before me." (Doc. and Cov., new edition, p 184.)

Every healthy, living body eliminates from its organism effete matter and particles which are obnoxious or injurious to it. When this process of ejection is not effected, the body is in an unhealthy condition, and must remain so until the natural work of purification is renewed.

The Church, as a living organization, is, in many respects, analogous to the human system. Each part of the body must be in harmony with the other parts, and that which is not in accord and cannot be brought into affinity with it must be ejected, or the whole will become diseased. The form must be animated by a living spirit, or, no matter how symmetrically it may be arranged, it will be nothing but a carcass. Vitality must flow to every atom incorporated therein, and if any particle becomes callous or dead and does not fall away of its own inadhesion, it must be excised or the body will suffer injury. On the other hand, no vitalized portion of the organism can be cut off without affecting the whole. Suffering and perhaps material harm may be the consequence. Such severance is mutilation, not elimination. Portions of the body may become temporarily paralyzed, or so conditioned that the general circulation is impaired and a numbness supervene that may be mistaken for death. Medical, not surgical treatment is then required, and the physician who can restore the parts to healthy action is worth far more, under such circumstances, than the surgeon whose remedy is comprehended in the knife, the saw and the scalpel.

Excommunication from the true Church of Christ is a very serious matter. It is spiritual death to those who are rightfully cut off, and condemnation to those who wilfully exercise the power of excommunication wrongfully. The caution given in the quotation we have made above has evidently a two-fold application. First, those who practice anything contrary to truth and righteousness must beware, for except they repent they will be cut off. As shown in the Savior's parable of the vine: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them in the fire and they are burned." The tree must be pruned of its dead branches and they are thenceforth only fit for destruction; but they are in the Master's hands to do with as seemeth Him good, the laborers in the garden or vineyard have nothing further to do with them when they are cast out.

Second, those who are entrusted with power to excommunicate must act in truth and righteousness in their official duties. They are not authorized to cut off any live limb, or any inactive particle of the body which may be warmed or quickened or encouraged into life. Sin and transgression, or positive discord with the system, must exist before excommunication is justifiable. Woe unto those who are cut off the Church! And woe unto them who cut men or women off the Church for private pique, or to exercise undue dominion, or for any reason not prompted by truth and righteousness! All the acts of men, official or otherwise, will be reviewed and passed upon in the Great Day. Well may the caution embodied above be given to both offending member and executive officer. It is better to save than to destroy. There is more glory in winning the erring to repentance than in severing the last thread that holds them to the arteries of life.

But the work of excommunication is necessary, if disagreeable. The wicked and corrupt, the stubborn and rebellious who love strife and hate harmony, the slanderer of the good, the promulgator of heresy who will not desist, all who work iniquity must be dis-fellow-

shipped by the saints, or the Church will not flourish under the favor of God. And when it becomes a duty to cast out the evildoer, it should be done without hesitation or compunction and accomplished by common consent.

The Church is so organized that no one need submit to or suffer the consequences of improper excommunication. If one of the weakest of those who are called Saints is cut off unlawfully, easy redress is provided, and those who do not avail themselves of the means of restoration cannot reasonably complain if they suffer the consequences of their own supineness. Appeals are allowed in all cases tried before a Bishop's Court to the High Council of the Stake in which the trial took place. No fees are charged nor expenses incurred by the appellant. The Council is composed of men of character, sustained by the vote of the people in their position and presided over by the presidency of the Stake. These councils are probably the most equitable, inexpensive, patient and impartial tribunals in the world. And should any of their decisions be given in unrighteousness an appeal is provided from their verdicts, as may be seen by reference to the Doctrine and Covenants. Thus the transgressor, or the excommunicant who complains at being dealt with, is left without excuse, and darkness of mind, atrophy of the spirit, and ultimate exclusion from the presence of the Fountain of Eternal Life, will be the consequence of being cut off. There is no need for any member of this Church incurring these penalties. Sin, and sin only, is the cause of real dis-fellowship. Where that abounds in any branch of the Church the fruits of the gospel will not appear, and therefore the work of purification must go on, but it must be conducted in wisdom, patience, brotherly kindness and charity. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit." So said He who "spake as never man spake."

THE GENTLE MUSCOVITES.

THE superior civilization of the Russians, who have been waging a Christian war on the Turkish Mohammedans, has received another illustration.

Four Polish doctors were hanged by the Russians at Sophia. The Turks left the town on the approach of the Russians in such haste that they had no time to remove their wounded; these remained in the military hospitals under the care of five doctors, who trusted in the Geneva convention to protect them. All the doctors referred to were Poles, but four of them were Austrian subjects, and none of them had taken up arms against Russia. They formed part of the sanitary department of the Turkish regular army, and had been permitted to serve in it by their respective governments. Three of them, doctors of the Cracow University, were at once thrown into prison. The fourth, Dr. Gebhardt was supposed from his name to be a German, and he was employed for a few days as surgeon to the Russian wounded; but soon after the Russians discovered that he also was a Pole, and he was accordingly sent into prison with his comrades. In vain did he prove that he was an Austrian subject, that his elder brother was secretary to the Supreme Court of Justice at Vienna, and that he could not have taken part in the Polish insurrection of 1863, as he was then only 13 years old. He and his three colleagues were taken to a public square in Sophia and there hanged. The fifth doctor, M. Czerwinski, fortunately possessed an English passport, and this saved his life, the British Consul having interfered energetically on his behalf. Dr. Czerwinski was present at the execution, and brought the terrible news to Dr. Gebhardt's brother at Vienna.

Now let the apologists of the Muscovite barbarians quote this in support of their laudation, and as proof of the advanced civilization of the "deliverers" of Bulgaria.

An attempt has been made to abolish capital punishment in England. The sentimentalists were ingloriously defeated. The bill was lost by a vote of 263 against 64.

SECULAR VS. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

A GERMAN priest named Blasius Pistorius, a linguist and a scholar, has been convicted at Philadelphia of murder in the first degree. He shot a man named Isaac Jaquette for bringing his cows to a creek to water near the priest's brother's house.

A woman named Minnie Watson has been arrested at New York for a long series of larcenies. She is attractive in appearance and is well educated and well informed. She obtained access to the houses of wealthy people as hired help in different capacities, and waiting for a sure opportunity, gathered up the portable valuables and left.

We refer to these two cases, which have obtained considerable notoriety, to show that the common argument maintaining that scholastic education is the great antidote to crime is a mistake. Criminal statistics of several of the States show that the majority of convicts are able to read and write. A knowledge of letters is evidently insufficient to prevent wrong-doing. The greatest rascals are the best informed. Sin is heinous in proportion to the light of the sinner.

Moral and religious education is absolutely necessary to proper culture. Mere intellectual advancement will not stem the tide of corruption that flows through all grades of society. The higher faculties must be impressed and trained, and those lofty impulses imparted which only the precepts and spirit of true religion can afford. Secular education does not reach to that part of human nature which needs these impressions. This is why the American system which expunges religion from the schools will fail, and why educated scoundrels increase in numbers and nefarious skill.

It may be argued that there are lots of pious criminals, and that one of the cases referred to above is an example of a religiously educated murderer. But technical theology is not religion in its true sense, and a religion that teaches that the worst offences can be condoned by confession and easy penance, is not likely to do much towards purifying the heart or touching the secret springs of conscience.

Nothing short of a divine influence, obtained by faith, will reach that depravity which some people inherit as they do those physical peculiarities that are transmitted from one generation to another. Aversion to evil can be implanted and cultivated in the soul, destroying the germs of sin—the roots that bring forth fruits of crime. But the seeds of mere peculiar culture will not answer the purpose, and therefore the principles of true religion, by which humanity can be brought into union, communion and harmony with Deity, should form an essential part of the education of our youth. Any system which eschews this is radically imperfect. The tendency of the age and the policy of the country is unfavorable to any combination of religious with secular instruction. And thus the juvenile mind is kept back from God; its natural yearnings after something higher than can be comprehended by the senses is repressed; the spiritual faculties become dwarfed and inactive; the moral powers which are in close sympathy with them are benumbed; the better part of human nature is conquered by the lower; and boys and girls schooled without religion are developed into men and women who are only cultivated animals.

The people who have commenced to work out a plan of social regeneration which will ultimately spread from Zion to the uttermost parts of the globe, must watch well the training of their children. It is a good thing to obtain for them that learning which is imparted in the general course of scholastic education. But care should be taken that this is not received at the expense of that higher instruction, which will cultivate their moral and spiritual faculties and make them men and women of virtue and faith. By blending of the twain in one, true education will be imparted, and the fruits of the union will be righteousness and power with God, as well as know-

ledge and intelligence in earthly things. Zion cannot be built up by intellect and labor alone; its children must be "pure in heart," and have communion with the higher powers, crime and violence and avarice and lust must be banished and overcome, or the King will never appear in His beauty and establish His throne in the midst of His people. These are words of warning and of truth.

A LAMANITE ORATION.

FOLLOWING is a speech delivered by Moses, the high chief of the Yakimas, the Cascade or Walla Walla Indians, as translated almost verbatim by a gentleman of high standing and culture for the Omaha Herald. It was spoken in a Grand Medicine Council of Chiefs at Kittitas Valley, Washington Territory. Moses is a portly, dignified warrior, who dresses neatly and is very reserved. The speech is full of pathos and force, and is a scathing rebuke to the whites for the unjust policy pursued in regard to the remnants of the Lamanites:

CHIEFS. We have heard from the great White Feather and the great White Chief at Washington. We have asked to give us peace, and let our old men and old women rest on these lands that belong to the great chief of our fathers. We have asked them to let our young men and young women go free, to fish where they will, hunt where they can. We have asked them to take away their soldiers, their agent and their traders, and let us all, old and young, buy where we want to sell where it suits us. We have asked them to set us free, and not tie us down like wild ponies are tied down—to a stake on the sage lands. We have asked them to let us have our own religion, our own preachers and our own places to meet the Great Spirit, and talk with him in our own way—in our own belief. We have asked them to make a good straight road, that all the white men and the black men, and red men could travel on it in peace, and not push each other off in anger. We have asked them to say the same good words to us that they have said to the whites and to the blacks, and to keep their words as true as the waters in that lake, (Moses Lake) keep among its rocks, and not sink away or roll over. We have asked them to let our young braves go as free as their young braves, and to be as strong and as kind as they are to us. We have asked them to punish our bad people under the same laws they punish their bad whites. We have asked them not to kill our old men and our old women, because some of our bad young men had done wrong, when the bad whites stole their lands, their ponies, and made them drunk on bad fire-water (revenue whiskey). We have asked them to make strong words with us now, and keep them strong as long as these waters run (Columbia river) or that mountain (Cascade) stands. We have asked them to let us go to where the sun rises, when we want to see the Great Father and talk with him, and to come where the sun sets when we want to rest from our long trail—just the same as his white children come and go and go and come. We have asked them to hear all our people have to say, to come and see us—to see how poor we are, to see how sick our old men are, and to see our naked bodies and bleeding feet. You see how the grass has died away from these lands they have tied us to; how the deer and fish have gone, and how our children cry for something to eat. We have asked them to take pity on us, and not get angry with us and drive us like dogs on to the sharp briars and rough stones, away yonder to where no water runs, no grass grows, no fish swim, or deer trail.

The Great White Father and the Great White Chief have ears but they do not hear the poor Indian cry for help. They have hearts but they do not feel the poor Indian's pain. They have fine clothes and big houses, and they do not care for our torn blankets and poor wigwams. They say we are a venge; we are all bad; we are all too poor to be allowed in council, or smoke the pipe of peace with them, and they must leave us to go down and die in the white agent's pens, like

the salmon die in your nets. They hear not our cry for help, care not for our wants, and pity not our old men and young children.

They hear the cry of the black, but cannot hear us. They hear the cry of the yellow men (Chinese) but cannot hear us. They hear the cry of the other colors, but cannot hear us. Their hearts have turned to stone, their eyes look blood, their hands are very cold.

Chiefs, what can we do? The white men are as many as the leaves on yonder trees—as many as the sands on yonder shores. The Indians are as few as the leaves on one tree, or the sands on one shore. If we go to war we will all be shot down like dogs; if we stay on the reservations we will all starve and die, like salmon out of water. Let us go to the white man's chiefs, and tell them to go to the great White Council (Congress) and get their great council to set us free, as it set the black man free and as it set the yellow men (Chinese) free. They have many ears and many hearts. Some of them will hear and answer. Some of them will feel our pain and will take pity on us. Then the great papers will tell all the good whites how poor we are, and we will be set free to go and hunt where the game is, fish where the salmon runs, and to raise our ponies and corn where the grass grows and the rains fall and the waters run. Then, if the Great White Council will not hear us, or is cold and stony, let their soldiers then come, and we will fight and die on our own grounds, and die brave and good, and cry no more. Chiefs, I am done; my words are spoken."

LITERALIZING SCRIPTURE METAPHORS.

A NEW sensation in the South, which is also attracting attention and provoking comments all over the country, is a sermon delivered by Rev. John Jasper, a Baptist colored preacher at Richmond, Virginia. The gentleman claims to be the oldest colored minister of the gospel in that city, having been a preacher forty years, and the deliverer of 24,000 sermons. On the 17th, Mr. Jasper proved to his own satisfaction, and that of an immense crowd of his own color and persuasion, that the sun moves round the earth and not the earth around the sun. After quoting numerous passages of scripture referring to "the rising of the sun and the going down thereof," the famous arrest of the sun's progress at the command of Joshua, and showing that if the earth moved, the sea would all be spilled out, he said to his vast congregation, "Now all you what believe that the sun do move, hold up your right hand;" when every man, woman and child present showed in the manner desired, that they believed the same as the Rev. Jasper.

White preachers and editors who, unlike Mr. Jasper, extend their literary researches beyond the books of the Old and New Testaments, and mix a little science with their theology, have made considerable fun of the old colored scriptorian. But his error is one of which many of them are equally guilty—the literal interpretation of texts which are only metaphorical, or given, in relation to some fact, in words the most easily comprehended by the people for whom they were written, without correcting popular errors which had no special bearing upon the subject.

The Catholic Church reads the words "This is my body," in a literal sense, and hence the dogma of transubstantiation, requiring all true Catholics to view the consecrated wafer in the eucharist as containing the real body, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. Protestant churches read literally the threatened punishment of the wicked in "everlasting fire," where "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched;" where the "smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever;" and on such texts base their doctrines of a literal hell of flames and brimstone, in which the sinner is to suffer unutterable tortures without cessation through all eternity.

They understand that the main point in such texts as, "from the rising of the sun to the going down