

EDITORIALS.

THE "AMERICAN PARTY."

We publish in this issue a significant manifesto which has just appeared in the Pacific Coast papers. It has been issued by a new political organization, known as the American party. This body has a fair showing for a commencement, as, it already foots up 40,000 members. This merely forms the initiative snowball. As it rolls, it may be safely predicted that it will increase in dimensions and proportionate force. It is destined to wield a more or less potent influence in the political affairs of the country. This expectation is not grounded upon a chimerical basis, but upon the effect already produced in California. Some of the Coast journals attach a great deal of importance to the movement; notably the *Chronicle*, which warns the Republicans of the State regarding the inroads it is making in the ranks of their party from which the new organization gains most of its accessions. It predicts that unless demanded changes are made in the Republican ticket, in the form of concessions to the American Party, the former may look for defeat at the approaching State election. In other words, the defection in the Republican ranks will be strong enough to turn the scale against the party. This initiatory influence indicates that the new organization will, when extended throughout the Union, be a prominent factor in American politics. The material of which its beginning is composed can be found in considerable numbers in every State.

The declaration of principles is the embodiment of wit if it be true that brevity is the soul of that quality. It would be difficult to imagine anything more terse. It sweeps away, in theory, all existing political inequalities between different classes of citizens. It is to be inferred from this that a naturalized citizen would be equally eligible to the chair of the White House as one who claims this country as the place of his nativity. As the number of persons who aspire to that distinguished post is not multitudinous, this will not be a powerful inducement to swell the ranks of the party of recent birth. There is a serious impediment, however, to the unqualified equality enunciated by the declaration—the Constitution. That instrument provides that only those who are native born can ever grasp the chief sceptre of executive power in this Republic. The unqualified equality clause is therefore too wide to get an adhesive grip upon the "Supreme law of the land." But the new-fledged party may hope to have the same disposition made of the qualification clause of the Constitution referred to as of the naturalization laws, which they aim to have "unconditionally repealed."

It will be observed that the declaration is as wide as the mouth of a railroad tunnel at the top, and dwindles into something that resembles the "eye of a needle" at the bottom. An elephant could enter at one end, and a mosquito would have a poor show for admission at the other. It is one of the most remarkably liberal and at the same time contrasted documents of the kind ever floated upon the political sea of this Republic since the birth of the nation. Its universal adoption and enforcement would practically annihilate the grand American idea with which the fathers were so strongly imbued—that this country was to be a perpetual asylum for the oppressed of all nations. If the downtrodden of other countries, their hearts burning with desires to enjoy the sweets of freedom, were to continue to flock to our shores, like "doves to their windows," how much of an asylum would they find when the privilege of owning a foot of land was denied them? The refugees from the lands where despotism holds men in thralldom would be, by the enforcement of a despotic idea, in a condition of perpetual homelessness, with no hole into which they could crawl without being subject to the imminent risk of being kicked out.

The shutting of the national door against the people of other nations is the antipodes of the genius of American liberty, and cannot consistently be entertained. If anything is done in that direction it must necessarily be limited, otherwise one of the corner stones of the Republic will be cracked and endanger the equilibrium of the magnificent edifice. Such contractions are, however, being largely favored. Ideas utopian to the spirit that should obtain in this nation are gradually gaining ground, and, in the minds of the lovers of liberty, they bode no good to the nation. It is a common thing nowadays for men to talk trippingly of depriving citizens of their political property by the enacting of anti-freedom laws and without the application of ordinary judicial process. No people have more reason to observe the decadence of the letter and spirit of American freedom in these respects than the majority of the people of this fair Territory. Yet their experience will not be all loss, as it will qualify them, if they are apt in learning the lessons it affords, to vindicate the glorious principles upon which the national structure was founded, when the appropriate crisis arises.

The idea of the new party organization—so far as its sweeping intentions relating to the universal exclusion from common privileges of the people of other lands who come to what has been deemed the world's asylum to the oppressed is concerned—appeals to the sentiment of national selfishness. Nations are but individual aggregations, and unregenerate man is essentially self-benevolent. For that reason the advocacy of ideas which gratify this disposition are sure to impregnate a large proportion of the people, notwithstanding the liberal tendencies of the great majority.

The American Party will probably make considerable headway in a short space of time. Especially if they modify their expressed principles, which are altogether too overwhelmingly radical in some of their aspects, should the modifications not occur the title would be a misnomer. The Un-American Party would be more appropriate.

A NEW PROSECUTING ATTORNEY.

THE Peoria (Illinois) *Journal* has the following paragraph, which will probably be regarded with disgust by Mr. Dickson:

"The United States searched long to find a man who would make a good prosecuting attorney for Utah. They at last pitched upon a man who sports the classic name of Bierbower. He was active and above all other qualifications he was red-headed. This last trait secured him the place and he has shown that the confidence was not misplaced. He has secured the conviction of over one hundred polygamists. The Mormons hate him, but the Gentiles regard his red head as the beacon light of progress and the sun of purity, dissipating the fog of superstition and the mists of fanaticism. A man with a pure red head is always a patriot and generally a statesman. The world must be saved, if saved at all, by its red-headed men. As for red-headed women, they are apt to be a little too fiery for practical purposes, but they cannot well be dispensed with either."

We suggest, for the consolation of Mr. Dickson, that the above paragraph is quite as free from inaccuracies as are many that circulate among the newspapers of the country, having for their subject the "Mormons," and which are, in hundreds of instances, originated by his own organ in this city.

LEGAL MARRIAGE IN NEW YORK.

THE laws of the State of New York upon the subject of marriage and divorce, have heretofore been regarded as very strict, but, according to an article in the *New York World*, a recent legal decision in that State will go far towards relaxing their rigidity. What may constitute a legal marriage has been thus stated by the Court of Appeals of that State:

"A man and woman who are competent to marry each other may take upon themselves the relations of husband and wife and be bound to themselves, the State and society as such without going before a minister or magistrate, without the presence of any person as witness, and no record or written evidence of the act kept than merely by words of present contract between them. If, after that the marriage is denied, proof of actual cohabitation as husband and wife, acknowledgment and recognition of each other to friends and acquaintances and the public, and the reputation thereof will enable the court to presume that there was in the beginning an actual bona-fide marriage."

Such, for a long period has been the law upon this subject. But a decision which in a great measure supersedes that quoted, has been rendered by Judge Churchill in a somewhat celebrated divorce case, in which Charles L. Davis, the actor, widely known as Alvin Joslyn, was sued for absolute divorce by Jennie Noble Davis, who claimed to be his wife. From the testimony in the case it was shown that for nearly three years the parties lived together as man and wife; he introduced her as such to his friends and acquaintances from Maine to California. A sort of ceremony took place at Albany, wherein a ring played its accustomed part and vows of love and fidelity were exchanged. The woman was billed as Davis' wife in the theatrical troupe they were playing with, and in numbers of letters that passed between them he recognized their marital relations. A child was born to them a year and a half after their informal agreement to live together.

The defendant did not deny the foregoing facts, his only defense being that he permitted the woman to take his name in order to avoid scandal. The court thereupon decided there had been no marriage which the law could recognize as such, and that no sort of responsibility attached to the defendant in consequence of his share in the affair. Davis claims to have won his case by the argument that "a court of law or equity will not, as a matter of course, interfere with the relations between man and woman where the inception and the relations were immoral and meretricious."

The tenor of the *World's* article is

regretful, that the law should be so changed as to make it easy for men so disposed to establish with women the relations of husband and wife, only to dissolve them at will. The popular tendency is to undermine the safeguards of chastity and of the family, and to make it less difficult for unprincipled men to gratify their unholy passions.

THE ORIGIN AND DESTINY OF MAN.

THE General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church, not long ago, found it necessary to wrestle with the evolution theory, which had been adopted by a few of the ministers and college professors within its jurisdiction. A resolution was adopted that was understood to express the views and declare the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church at large on the subject of the creation. It was passed by a vote of 137 against 13, as follows:

"The Church remains at this time sincerely convinced that the scriptures as truly and authoritatively expounded in our 'confession of faith' and catechism, teach that Adam and Eve were created body and soul by immediate acts of Almighty Power, thereby preserving a perfect race unity, so that Adam's body was directed and fashioned by Almighty God without a natural animal parentage of any kind, out of matter previously created of nothing, and that any doctrine at variance therewith is a dangerous error, inasmuch as by methods of interpreting Scripture which it must demand, and in consequence, which by fair implication it will involve, it will lead to denial of doctrines, fundamental to faith."

It is remarkable that learned professors of various so-called Christian sects persist in their advocacy of so irrational a doctrine as the production of the universe out of nothing, and that they urge this as the teaching of Scripture and enforce it upon preachers and hearers as an essential dogma. One of the most potent causes of infidelity is the attempt of religious teachers to cram down the public throat such notions as are contained in the above resolution, as integral constituents of the Christian faith. The fundamental doctrines of the Christianity taught by Christ and his Apostles, are not affected in any way by the belief in or rejection of the orthodox theory concerning the origin of the universe. A man may be a sincere believer, and, what is far better, a consistent practitioner of the precepts of the Savior, and yet repudiate the notion that something can be produced out of nothing.

Common sense, supported by the investigations of science, revolts at the Presbyterian creation nonsense, and careful study of the Scriptures without the green spectacles of orthodoxy, shows that no such declaration as that in the Presbyterian resolution, and embodied in the creeds of different sects, can be found either in the Old or the New Testament. Nowhere in holy writ is it set forth that God created Adam's body out of nothing, nowhere it is proclaimed that the earth or anything in the heavens was fashioned out of nonentity. In Genesis we are told that God formed man out of the dust of the earth. This act is called creation. The same word is used in regard to the production of the earth. If "creation" means organization out of pre-existent material in the case of man, it means the same in regard to other beings and things. Thus the earth and all things therein, as well as other worlds that move in their allotted spheres and are spoken of in the Mosaic revelation, were created or organized out of matter that previously existed, as "the dust of the earth" existed before Adam's body was fashioned by the power of the Eternal. Whatever meaning may be specially attached by theologians to the term create, the fact remains that it is used in scripture in Adam's case to mean formation out of something and not out of nothing, and this annihilates the Presbyterian dogma, which is as rash an extreme in one direction as the modern evolution theory is in the other.

The New Testament—Heb. xi, 3—informs us that "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." In other words, that things which are now visible were produced from things that were invisible. This is very simple. Before the earth rolled in its orbit, framed into a world designed for the habitation of man, its elements were in a gaseous condition, as its atmosphere is now to mortal eyes. There is nothing in the statement which indicates or implies the formation of something out of nothing. On the contrary, the intimation is that things which are not seen were framed into things which can be seen, a process that has been continued from "the beginning" and which is now going on, as chemistry demonstrates even to schoolboys.

Much of the supposed authoritative teachings of Scripture against which science and sound reason protest, is nothing more than the dogmatism of human theology. It has been imposed upon that part of the world called Christendom as professedly divine, while neither the Almighty or either of his appointed ministers has ever presented it for the acceptance of mankind. The alleged conflict between science and religion

is really between science and that which passes for it, and the unauthorized teachings and notions of man-made creeds. All kinds of truth harmonize. The God of revelation is the God of nature. The laws which govern in spiritual and in natural things proceed from the same source. And it is the folly of men, not the wisdom of God, which brings about the collisions that occur between scientific developments and theological assertions.

In the inspired utterances of Joseph the Seer, the Latter-day Saints have "the sure word of prophecy" on this subject as well as many other matters of dispute in the nineteenth century. Most if not all the controversies which have taken place between the churchmen and the skeptics in modern times, are solved and settled in the revelations to the Prophet of the last dispensation. The word of the Lord through him is: "The elements are eternal." Out of nothing, nothing comes. The hand of Omnipotence fashions and forms innumerable shapes, and makes combinations of beauty and utility that transcend the power of man to comprehend in their wonderful diversity and adaptation to the multifarious wants of a universe of life and progress. But not the smallest mote springs from empty space, neither can an atom of matter be dissolved into nothingness. Changes may go on for ever but annihilation is an impossibility; and for the same reason creation from nothing is nothing but an absurdity.

The whole story of Adam's origin is not told in the brief sketch of this earth's formation recounted in the opening chapters of Genesis. The genealogy of Jesus given in Luke iii, makes Adam a "son of God." That he was not an evolution from lower forms of animal life is as certain as that he was not originated out of nothing. Both notions are equally unscientific and equally repugnant to revelation and common sense. Man is of a royal race, a divine line, a noble parentage. He has been made lower than the angels that he might rise above the angels, and pursue a career of glory and power that eternity only can disclose. As Jesus followed the Father, so his brethren may follow Jesus, and all things may become theirs if they take the course which He marks out.

Not from the plodding quadruped, the aqueous fish, the crawling reptile, the jellied cell or the floating slime sprang man, the lord and ruler of the creatures of this lower earth. He came from above as the offspring of Deity, and his proper sphere, when he proves himself worthy and fit for his glorious destiny, is among the Sons of God in the regions of eternal day, in harmony with the mighty intelligences who sway the sceptre over unnumbered worlds, and are like unto the Almighty Father who is over all, forever.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUNDAY.

THE Sabbath should be observed by the Latter-day Saints in the manner prescribed by the Church covenants and commandments, with which the humblest should be familiar.

The ward meetings should, under the influence of the Spirit, be made as instructive and attractive as possible. Some things are not conducive to the attainment of that object. Among them are speakers who, in the delivery of their discourses, give the impression to the audience that they are about to conclude, and then make a number of fresh beginnings. A speaker generally commits a grave error when he passes too many good camping places. Personal allusions—especially by way of rebuke—by a speaker are almost invariably in bad taste. In delivering an exhaustive discourse it is a good thing to avoid exhausting the patience and endurance of the audience. Long winded speakers are a terror to church-goers. Too great care cannot be exercised in regard to subject matter and the manner of enunciating it. Wisdom is one of the greatest gifts of God to man. It is to knowledge what the rudder is to the ship. By its aid quicksands and breakers are avoided. When there are more speakers than one it is not always necessary for the remarks of the later ones to consist exclusively of a review or revised edition of those who preceded. It is not necessary for a public speaker to announce to his audience, by way of introduction, that he is the reverse of an orator. The people will find that out soon enough, to their sorrow, if the speaker tells the truth about himself. Generally speaking personal allusions to self, for or against, are not in the best of taste, unless circumstances render them necessary. Such statements detract from the speaker's influence. Above every other consideration should be the observance of the commandment not to teach without the Spirit, which should be the governing influence in all the assemblies of the Saints.

The most ordinary good breeding demands that the audience be attentive, and mainly direct their eyes toward the speaker. There should be no whispering during service, and no leaving the building, unless positively necessary. The singing portion of the exercises is a species of prayer, when performed in the spirit and meaning thereof. This fact is favorable to congregational singing (in part at least) that they may

take part in that feature of the worship. The habit of some members of choirs of passing around slips of paper to each other during service may be deemed by some to be respectable on account of the great age of the practice, but although it may be musty with length of years, it is despatched with vulgarity. It is decidedly unseemly. The practice of looking over music books and holding whispered consultations about the selection of the closing hymn, is a rude brother to the habit just named. They both have bad breeding for their parentage. Both indicate the opposite of religious sentiment in those who are guilty of the behavior.

While most strangers who attend the Tabernacle services are respectful in their demeanor, there are exceptions to that rule. Some act as if they had come to ridicule everything said and done, and as if to manifest their own lack of good manners, by talking, giggling, resorting to the use of opera glasses, etc. Such ill-behaved persons should be invited by the ushers to step outside of the building, and some friend should advise them to spend a few months among western cow-boys, that their demeanor in a place of public worship may be improved by superior example. It appears difficult for some people to learn that that which is held religiously sacred by any body of people, should, in certain aspects, be treated in that regard by all.

"SLUGGING" SENSATIONS.

For some time past a sort of "slugging" mania seems to have existed among the sporting fraternity in this locality. So much has this been the case that it appears as if Salt Lake was on the road to rapidly become a centre for fistie exhibitions. Scarcely anything more brutal can be imagined than a real prize fight. The law winks at those of the hippodrome order, but frowns upon the genuine article. Those who look upon genuine pugilistic encounters—"for blood"—as a scandal upon decency are doubtless wondering why the officers of the law are slumbering on the subject. It is common in certain quarters to prate about the law's majesty just now. Is it not in order to vindicate it in reference to the exhibitions alluded to? In case the officers should favorably consider the advisability of performing their duty in the premises, when occasion demands, it may be interesting to all sorts of intending participants in prize fights to peruse the following from the Compiled Laws of Utah, lest they ignorantly step into "a sea of trouble."

SEC. 231.—Every person who engages in, instigates, encourages or promotes any ring or prize fight, or any other premeditated fight or contention (without deadly weapons), either as principal, aid, second, umpire, surgeon or otherwise, is punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary not exceeding two years.

SEC. 232.—Every person willfully present as a spectator at any fight or contention mentioned in the preceding section, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

A NEW "LEAGUE" AGAINST UTAH.

THE failure to pass the infamous measure known as the Tucker-Edmunds bill at the last session of the National Legislature, greatly enraged the clique of adventurers who have determined to gain control of this Territory. Ever since the adjournment of Congress, they have been planning for another effort to press for the passage of the bill at the next session. The chief consequence of its enactment would be the practical disfranchisement of all the "Mormons," and the domination of Utah by persons representing but a sixth part of its citizens. The remaining five-sixths would have no voice in the conduct either of local or of national affairs. The scheme to bring this about is endorsed by men calling themselves Democrats; and the movement is said to be in the interest of republicanism.

To justify this complete subversion of the principle that majorities should govern in each locality, the claim has been put forth that it is for the purpose of putting down polygamy. Why the suppression of a practice affecting only a very few individuals, comparatively, should be considered so important that the very foundations of civil and religious liberty are to be disturbed, does not appear extremely clear to an unprejudiced observer. But granting that this is so desirable that oppression and injustice may be excused to effect it, no one has yet been able to show how legislation to transfer all the local offices in Utah from the chosen of the large majority to those of the small minority, will affect the polygamy question. It will simply destroy what republicanism exists in the Territory and give a few unprincipled schemers that which they have intrigued for for years. How the disfranchisement of monogamous "Mormons" would discourage polygamy, is something that will puzzle even professional politicians to explain.