

## EDITORIALS.

## AN ANTI-"MORMON" NOVELETTE.

DURING the past summer some imaginative and low-minded person concocted a story, which we believe first appeared in the *Eureka* (Nevada) *Leader*, that has been copied into several papers with comments, and reflections, and calls upon Congress to "dynamite the Mormons and destroy polygamy." This is the story, which purports to relate what took place at Ogden, when a company of Swedish immigrants arrived:

"I was looking on with great curiosity, when I discovered a tow-headed, buxom girl weeping bitterly. Two or three old women were scolding at her, and a withered up old Mormon stood with his arm around her. He finally coaxed her off to his wagon, she screaming and crying that she would not marry him and he never letting go of her until he set her down upon the wagon tongue. A girl was following them. I halted her and asked what was the trouble. She said that this girl was pledged to the old man and that he had paid her passage out; and now she did not want to marry him because he already had a wife and seven children. I asked if she would be forced to do so. The girl replied: 'Of course she will. They have pledged her to him.' Poor thing! the last that I saw of her she was struggling to get away from him, and the withered old fellow was holding on with both arms around her. It is sickening to think of such things in a civilized land. Dark as that girl's mind was, she had some grains of virtue and some delicate instincts. The despair pictured on her face showed that."

Now we venture to say that no one in Ogden ever saw anything of the kind except the veracious author of this atrocious romance, and he, or she, or it beheld it only in a very evil mind's eye. The idea of anyone being compelled to marry an old man or a young man, an old woman or a young woman, in the Territory of Utah is simply preposterous. And it is also diametrically opposed to the theory and practice of the Latter-day Saints or "Mormons." No one can possibly enter into "Mormon" marriage except by their own free will and choice. Supposing that a man had advanced the money for the passage of the young Swedish girl with "despair pictured on her face." There is no law or custom which would require the girl to marry him in payment. There would be no difficulty in the way of her earning the money very soon to liquidate the debt, as serving girls are in great demand here at good wages. There is no place in Utah where any such claim could be enforced, and there are no people in the world who would be quicker to relieve a person from any such obligation as here alleged than the Latter-day Saints.

It seems absurd, no doubt, to many of our readers, to notice such rubbish as is contained in the paragraph we have quoted. We should pay no attention to it, and have not done so till now, although we have seen it several times repeated, were it not that reputable papers are foolish or base enough to copy it as a fact. The story is so improbable that we should think it would be recognized as a fabrication without any criticism or denial. It is simply a nasty little novelette.

## MORE ABOUT ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

INVESTIGATIONS into the subject of the dangers attending the present system of lighting by electricity demonstrate that unless proper precautions are adopted, accidents involving the loss of life and property are extremely likely to take place. We have referred to some occurrences of the kind in these columns, not with a view to retard the progress of electric illumination by any means, but to promote caution and thus aid in preventing the repetition of such occurrences as we have related.

It appears that Mr. Brush himself had a narrow escape while explaining his own illuminator. By some careless movement the electric fluid struck one of his thumbs, inflicting an ugly and painful gash, laying the flesh bare to the bone. A building

in Chicago was fired by the contact with a nail, of a copper wire, supplying the electric light. A house in New York was fired by a wire touching a cornice, and in Cincinnati a similar case occurred.

The National Association of Fire Engineers of the United States, at a convention in Richmond, Virginia, investigated this subject at considerable length, and after hearing from several electricians, adopted the following, which we commend to the consideration of all interested:

"The resolutions reported by the committee were adopted, and were as follows:

"After hearing the report of the committee on topic No. two, and the evidence adduced in the discussion following as to the danger of combustion and the liability of serious injury and probable death to any one coming in contact with improperly insulated or broken wires used for conducting electricity for lighting purposes, it is the opinion of this association that, as the electric light is about to be introduced in many of our cities and towns, and without due precautions being taken in putting up the wires, and their introduction into buildings, they will become one of the worst and most dangerous factors in the already sufficiently difficult problem of 'unknown causes of fires,' and their extinguishment, that our fire departments have to contend with; therefore,

'Resolved, That we, the National Association of Fire Engineers of the United States, urge upon the authorities of all cities and towns where the electric light is about to be introduced, the absolute necessity of passing ordinances governing the manner in which all wires shall be strung for the purpose of producing the electric light.

'First—That the wires shall be distinct from all others.

'Second—That they shall be thoroughly insulated.

'Third—There shall be upon the exterior of all buildings where the wires are introduced an absolute cut-off, (not a mere shunt,) so that in case the firemen are called upon by cause of fire to enter there the cause of instant death—the inevitable result of coming in contact with improperly insulated or broken wires under very many situations—may be in a very great measure avoided."

## A DUPE'S LETTER.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Sacramento Record-Union* writes a letter from Salt Lake, in which he undertakes to enlighten the western world on the subject of the "Mormon Church in Utah." He signs the epistle "D." After reading all that "D" has to say, we have come to the conclusion that his name is Dupe. Somebody has crammed him full with silly stories and old rusty anti-"Mormon" rubbish, and he now undertakes to bring it forth again for the regalement of the people of the coast, who have heard the same stupid yarns over and over again for years. We are not surprised at Dupe's receiving these stories or writing them down gravely as facts. But we must confess to some surprise that the *Record-Union* should print them.

There is only one thing in the letter that has not been told before, and that, like the rest of the stories repeated for the eleven hundred-and-eleven years, is untrue. A few months ago a delivery wagon was purchased for the benefit of the hands employed around the tithing office and public works, and Dupe was told that this was specially used and "kept on the go all the while," carrying provisions for the leaders of the Church. Of course Dupe's ears gaped and took this all in, as well as the threadbare and dilapidated falsehoods about President Young's getting "a million dollars a year" from the tithing, boasting he could "buy up all Congress with his millions," and so on. Dupe says, "What becomes of this tithing fund no one knows, or how much it amounts to no one knows outside of the men who handle it." How then did Dupe find out that it amounted to a million dollars a year, and that Brigham Young appropriated it?

The rogues who stuffed Dupe with the musty tales which he has spread out in the columns of the *Record-Union*, have been very anxious to learn all the details of the Church finances and have not succeeded, and therefore they imagine because they nothing about those

funds that nobody else does. Their impertinent curiosity is not satisfied and they resent the closing of the books against their Paul Pry noses. It is none of their business, but is open to any Church member having an interest in the matter. Dupe ought not to expect that a stranger coming into this city will be accommodated with information about things which do not concern him, and those visitors who, like Dupe, spend a little time at Salt Lake and then undertake to tell all about the workings of the "Mormon" marriage system in homes which they never see, and in a Perilory reaching over four hundred miles in length, only expose their own folly to thoughtful people.

There is one statement made by Dupe that we will notice, because it is a notion that many intelligent people may entertain; that is:

"The parents adhere closely to their religion, but the children, on growing up, break away from it. The Church is thus compelled to keep up its numbers by direct importation from abroad."

The fact is that the most efficient missionaries in the field are of "Mormon" parentage. Also that a very far less percentage of "Mormon" children, when grown up, "break away" from the Church than of people who are brought here from abroad. Now and then some young man or young woman abjures the faith of the parents, but such cases are very rare and few compared with the number of those who are firm in their adherence. Our Sunday Schools, young men's and young ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, and other agencies for the instruction of the youth, have the effect of indoctrinating them in the principles of "Mormonism," and when once understood and sensed in their true spirit, it is not at all likely that they will be forsaken by the young people; unless, as they grow up to maturity, they are led into temptation by the agencies supported by those "Christian civilizers" who gave Dupe his points, and who would rather see a young man drunken and debauched, and a young girl led into infamy, than that they should remain in the faith and practice of the Church of the parents.

We have reason to be proud of the children of the Latter-day Saints, although, as any sensible person might reasonably expect, some go astray, and bring sorrow to their parents' hearts. And there is this fact to consider, if a young "Mormon" man or woman goes into sin and vice, that is the surest indication that he or she will forsake the "Mormon" Church. Let Dupe ponder on that, and when he goes to another place of note, and wishes to write it up, unless he desires to misrepresent let him learn the facts from those who know them, and will state them honestly, and not suffer himself to be duped by the designing, to do the work of the Devil.

## PRAYER AND THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH.

THE *Pacific Christian Messenger* does not seem to take Talmage's view of the prayer question. He contended that the prayers offered up for President Garfield's life had been "triumphantly answered." The *Messenger* says:

"For nearly three months the united petitions of God's people ascended morning, noon and night to a throne of grace to spare the life of the President. The petition was not granted. This has led to much discussion in the pulpit and the papers as to the efficacy of prayer. Surely if God answers prayer at all, it is said, he would have answered this united, long-continued and earnest supplication of his children, and many are discouraged."

It is claimed by some of the religious papers that this failure to obtain the desired answer to prayer has been the cause of an increase of skepticism in the land, and that "many Christians question whether the promises to hear and answer prayer are sure."

"It appears to us the height of folly and presumption for short-sighted mortals to imagine that the Almighty is bound to do as they desire, simply because they pray for what they wish. We do not so understand the promises of God in relation to prayer. The purposes of God cannot be turned aside, neither can his plans be subverted to gratify those who only

see the present and know not the ends in view of the Omniscient One.

Sometimes a great number of people unite in petitions to an official holding the pardoning power, for the life of a convict condemned to die. The officer has something else to consider besides the wishes of the petitioners. Public policy has to be borne in mind. Justice has claims that must be satisfied. Principles are at stake that should be maintained. And a wise man will not be swayed altogether by considerations of sentiment and the expressed desires of sympathetic people, but will study what is right to do in the premises, and what will be for the good of the whole community.

God, who comprehends the results of things, knows what is best for His creatures and therefore is not, and ought not to be, swayed from bringing about His designs by the prayers of those who comprehend not. The idea that the Lord is under obligations to do just what His creatures ask, if a large number of them request it, is to us absurd. It leaves no room for His discretion; it makes Him the creature of human will; it constitutes mankind the dictators and reduces the Deity to the condition of their servant. "Ask and ye shall receive," is a promise subject to many qualifications. An indulgent parent will grant the requests of a child if for the benefit of the little one and consonant with wisdom and the parents' own purposes and experience. Denial is often far better for the child than compliance with its wishes. The parent, too, may be rightfully displeased with the child and therefore properly refuse the request. The Eternal Father deals thus with His children. Have the people of the United States merited the favor of God so much as to have demands upon His interposing power?

One of the essentials to prevailing prayer is faith. Those who ask must do so in faith, nothing doubting. Were the prayers offered for the life of Garfield presented in that unwavering faith? Or did not many of those who prayed that he might live expect all the time that he would die? The secret reasons for the prayers for the late President's recovery would be an interesting study, if we could read motives as God discerns them. They were diverse and some of them selfish. Union is necessary to successful prayer from a number of people. Were they united in spirit? Did not some pray from a political kneeling ground, with a desire to keep down the Stalwarts who were likely to succeed to power? Did not others pray in fear that their own positions would be endangered by the death of the President? Did not others ask for his life as an experiment or test of the efficacy of prayer? And did not many join in lip service and as a mere matter of form?

But whether the essentials to true, fervent and effectual prayer entered or not into the call upon God for the wounded President's recovery, the right of refusal must remain with the Almighty, no matter if it were for the benefit or chastisement of the petitioners, or because it would be inharmonious with His own plans in reference to the nation and the progress of human events.

And it is very poor reasoning to conclude that prayer is ineffectual on general principles because in this case the requests of the people were not complied with. On the same principle, if one petition to Congress is refused no others should ever be presented. The Latter-day Saints know by repeated experience that God does hear and answer prayer. And while the world grows skeptical, and thus builds up a wall of unbelief between earth and heaven, the Saints stand as living witnesses to the efficacy of prayer offered in faith, in the right spirit, in meekness, humility, submission to the divine will, and confidence that all things shall be done according to the eternal wisdom of Him who knoweth all things.

## "PAGANIZING INFLUENCES."

THE *San Francisco Monitor*, a Catholic organ, having made the statement that the public schools of California were "godless," "demoralizing" and under "pagan influences," was taken to task by some of the secular papers. Whereupon the *Monitor* maintains its assertions and says:

"It was only a short time since that Rev. Aaron Williams, a well-known Protestant clergyman of this

city, said openly at a noonday prayer meeting of Protestants, that a teacher in the public schools assured him that the majority of the boys and girls therein were utterly skeptical regarding scripture truth and their soul's eternal welfare. They were going down to hell as fast as they could go, and they never thought of it—never, apparently, even dreamed of it. This single fact alone is sufficient to prove the 'paganizing influences,' and as to the schools being 'godless,' they have been acknowledged to be of that iniquitous character by the best-informed non-Catholic writers of our day. \* \* \* Parents will be held responsible before God for the salvation of the souls of their children, who are the innocent victims of parental error, when their faith is endangered by proximate paganism such as has been illustrated by the Protestant clergyman whose words we have quoted."

While we do not endorse many of the doctrines of Catholicism, we agree with the *Monitor* in its strictures upon the system which shuts God out of the schoolroom, and keeps children most of their time under the influence, that ignore religion, if they are not positively opposed to it. There can be little wonder that skepticism is increasing in the land, when school teachers are barred from inculcating the truths of the gospel, and the fact that they themselves are infidels forms no barrier to the obtaining of control over the plastic minds of youthful pupils.

This subject is one that should recommend itself to the attention of the thoughtful among the Latter-day Saints. We need more schools into which faith shall enter, and the duty which mankind owes to God will be made part of primary education. As our present system stands, in such parts of the Territory as have a mixed population, doctrinal teaching cannot be made any prominent feature in the district school. We shall either have to remodel the present system, or inaugurate denominational schools under Church patronage and direction, that our little ones may not be kept outside the pale of religious influences for five days out of seven in every week. We want God in the school room as well as in the Tabernacle, and the spirit of our religion should permeate all our affairs. There are enough "paganizing influences" in the world, without their introduction into our school-houses.

## VISIONS IN THE CLOUDS.

THE following account of phenomena said to have been witnessed by different persons, is taken from the columns of the *Scientific American*. Of course we do not vouch for its correctness and therefore offer no opinion as to the character of the appearances, but we remind our readers that one of the tokens of the latter times, in connection with other events which are now transpiring, were to be "signs in the heavens" as well as in the earth:

"Displays of aurora borealis are evidently infrequent in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The local papers of the latter part of September and the first week in October contain numerous references to marvelous visions in the clouds, and exhibit a mediæval condition of popular intelligence in the rural districts scarcely less marvelous. The Warrentown (Va.) *Solid South* says: 'A number of reliable and responsible people, whose names we can give, about a week ago, saw an apparition in the heavens, about 10 o'clock p.m., of white robed figures, which were supposed by those who saw them to be angels. It is all the talk of the people in and around the villages of New Baltimore and Buckland.' The *Richmond Dispatch*, of the 7th, prints a note from Mr. M. C. Grasty, of Fredericksburg, Va., dated 5th inst., in which he says: 'Many persons in this community claim to have witnessed a most alarming sight in the heavens some nights since, just before daybreak. The heavens are said to have been lighted, and vast numbers of soldiers appeared, uniformed, armed and drilling. Who else saw it, and what is the explanation? Could it have been a mirage?'

Similar observations were made further north. A Wilmington, Del., dispatch says: 'The people in this vicinity are greatly excited over what they believe to be supernatural manifestations. A little girl,