

his first wife. He was educated, intellectual and talented, fond of books, but fonder of roystering and having a wild time among congenial spirits in the middle classes of society. If he had been born poor and not afflicted with the curse (as it proved to be to him) of nobility, he might have become a useful citizen and a shining light in the world; but title made him indolent and indolence was palliated by excesses which brought debt, disease and at last death at a time when he should have been in the heyday of life. It is doubtful if one pitying tear fell upon his bier, if one friendly hand placed a flower upon his grave, if one kindly thought will be turned upon his life. Thus perish those who court the vanities of life in preference to its fields of usefulness, who make of living a means of constant reproach to nature and its Author, and who seek surcease from a reproachful conscience in the pernicious pleasures of the day.

### THE USES OF MYTHOLOGY.

A play was presented on the stage of the Salt Lake Theatre last week the plot and incidents of which were absurd in the extreme, and doubtless caused some of the more sober-sided to wonder how the human family could be educated down to the point of patronizing and enjoying such performances. The super-sensitive and hypercritical auditors everywhere find something to condemn in everything that is placed before them, but "Niobe" must be a perfect feast for the gratification of grumbling.

This play has its uses, as we suspect all plays have, and they are not all unwholesome. Niobe as a historical character is *nil*, being purely a creation of heathen mythology. She is represented as the queen of Thebes, a thousand years or more before Christ; she was vainly fond of her children, and upon their destruction wept so inconsolably that the ruling powers struck her dumb and motionless, from which the poets evolve the suggestion that she was turned into stone. In the play her petrified body is restored to life by means of the action of a vagrant current from an electric light wire—the midnight of barbarism and the late afternoon of civilization brought face to face! What a grand opportunity for prearranging at a glance the monstrous strides which man under the guidance of a higher intellectuality and the light of a superior Power has wrought! This is indifferently done in the play, but enough is presented to make plain, by contrast, some of the shame and delusions of our more advanced life, the hollowness of many of our customs, the unnaturalness of some of our habits and the degree of insincerity and untruthfulness with which our public and private manners have become interwoven. While Niobe, as we know her, never existed, the manner in which she depicts herself is doubtless an approximate reflex of the time in which she is supposed to have lived, and as such is calculated to fill the thoughtful mind with reflection.

Mythology and fable are alike in that, while both are founded in impos-

sibility and their incidents are like the details of a "midsummer night's dream," they point a moral and adorn a tale; literature could not have reached the high, the instructive and the entertaining place which it holds in our advanced civilization without such adjuncts, and they are certainly harmless even to those who esteem them useless.

### THE CHURCH PERSONAL PROPERTY DECISION.

As will be seen by a notice in another column, the decree of the Supreme Court of the Territory in the Church case conforms to the decision as rendered by Chief Justice Zane and published in these columns on Saturday last, and authorizes the use of the personal property of the Church, under direction of a trustee, for the building and repairing of houses of worship and the support of the poor. This decision is so clearly in line with justice and equity that it occasions little surprise, yet a great many profess to have prepared themselves for a contrary result and affect to fear that the decision will not be allowed to stand if an appeal be taken on the part of the government. The News does not share this fear. We believe the best sentiment of the country is with the Church in this controversy, and since prejudice and bitterness have had their day, we think the highest court will affirm the findings of the local tribunal. The result thus far certainly vindicates the course of the authorities in resorting to every legal weapon to preserve the property rights in question, and it is a cause of much congratulation all round.

Bishop Hardy, the newly chosen trustee, was seen by a News representative this morning and, as appears from the interview, anticipates no trouble in speedily preparing himself to enter upon his responsible duties.

### PRESIDENTIAL RELIGIONS.

It looks as though the Presbyterians would continue to occupy the front seat during four years more, as theirs will still be the "official church" in Washington. Mr. Cleveland is a member of that communion, though he has never been a pillar as has Mr. Harrison. Alluding to the form of religion observed by various Presidents, an exchange discovers that Jackson was the first Presbyterian elected. Polk was baptized on his deathbed by a Methodist minister, but had attended the Presbyterian church out of deference to his wife's wishes. Buchanan was a Presbyterian, and Lincoln, while not a member, worshiped with that flock. Washington, Madison, Monroe, W. H. Harrison, Tyler, Taylor and Arthur were Episcopallians. Jefferson was an agnostic. John Adams, John Quincy Adams and Fillmore were Unitarians. Van Buren was a member of the Dutch Reformed church and Garfield a preacher of the Church of the Disciples. Pierce was a Trinitarian Congregationalist. Grant and Hayes were Methodists. Johnson, though a believer in God, the immortality of the soul, and the inspiration of the Scriptures, was a member of no church.

### THE PROPOSED EXTRA SESSION.

There are opinions for and against the proposed extra session of Congress to follow immediately upon President Cleveland's inauguration. The *Chicago Dispatch*, in an editorial carefully reviewing the situation, concludes that if the calling of such a session was ever a justifiable procedure it is so in this instance. It says the people have literally thundered into the new President's ears their desire to be "emanipated at once" from the "oppressive and piratical exactions of the McKinley bill," language which, coming from an independent paper, may be set down as emphatic at least. Attention is called to England, where a popular revolution bears fruit in two weeks or so; while in this country, if we observe schedule time, nothing can be done before a year from next month; and the earliest time at which the new Congress can get together and settle down to business is more than four months ahead, and only then can it be done by the call of the incoming President. That such call is desired is declared to be the unanimous opinion of the Democratic party.

Our cotemporary, however, presents another side to the question, saying:

It is doubtful whether on March 4th the Democrats will control the Senate, as they certainly will a year later; and to elaborate a tariff bill in the House only to have it defeated in the Senate would fatally prejudice tariff reform for years to come. Another serious objection to an extra session is that it would flood Washington with politicians and office-seekers before the new administration could fairly assume control. The result would be that congressmen and government officials would be so hounded by beggars that public business could not be attended to, and the scene would excite the disgust of all parties. It will be seen, therefore, that in respect of an extra session Cleveland is in something of a dilemma.

The *Dispatch* is in error in saying the Democrats will certainly control the Senate a year after the fourth of next March, unless they control it by that time. No terms of senators expire in 1894, and if new states were admitted there is no absolute or even approximate certainty as to how any of them would go politically; but no matter as to that. The conclusion arrived at is a sound one without reference to the premises. The people of the country have reposed a tremendous responsibility—an enlarged trust—in the Democratic party by giving it a renewed lease of power and practically without opposition, so that it may do whatsoever it will. Of course they expect changes to be made, reforms accomplished; but they are very sensitive and do not care at present to have what they evidently regard as one extreme followed by another. Moderation, consideration and deliberation are three of the abstract nouns which the new administration would do well to adopt as its sign by which to conquer; and from the temper and demeanor of the coming President it is tolerably sure that they will not be overlooked. The country is in no imminent peril, and no great calamity is likely to ensue by letting the laws alone for a short time longer, unless something vicious should be accom-