

EDITORIALS.

THE OPIUM TRAFFIC.

THE use of opium among the "civilized" nations appears to be largely increasing. The widespread indulgence in intoxicating drinks is greatly to be deplored, and philanthropists and public teachers have a great field for the exercise of their best powers in efforts to stem the tide of intemperance. At the same time the evils of the opium habit ought to be ventilated, and legislation is as much needed towards restricting the opium traffic as the manufacture and sale of alcoholic stimulants.

The effects of opium on the human system are very pronounced and, though the drug is one of the most useful in the whole pharmacopoeia in the hands of prudent physicians, its inordinate use is more baneful even than inebriety. It is claimed that there is a growing call for it in the United States, and that where alcoholism has been abandoned, opium in various forms has been adopted as a substitute in a large number of instances.

Opium smoking has been introduced into this country by the Chinese, but is under the ban of popular censure, and in many places, including this city, it is interdicted by municipal ordinances. The laws against it should be vigorously enforced. The crafty Mongolians will take advantage of a lull in police watchfulness, and the business of providing the drug for smokers of all races who desire it will be carried on slyly if measures are not adopted to prevent the nefarious traffic.

The heavy increase in the importation of opium into the United Kingdom is exciting some concern in England, and a recent parliamentary return, giving the exact figures of the quantity brought into the country, has not served to allay this feeling. In 1860 the quantity imported was 210,867 pounds, and by 1871 the opium imported annually had rarely exceeded 300,000 pounds. In 1871, however, it rose to 591,466 pounds, and since 1874 the average has been 573,000 pounds. The total in 1881 was 793,146 pounds. The whole of this enormous quantity was not, however, consumed in the United Kingdom. The exports in 1881, the largest in any year, amounted to 401,883 pounds, leaving 391,263 pounds for consumption. The average annual consumption for the preceding ten years was but 280,000 pounds, and in 1880 it was 112,795 pounds.

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

THE scheme for the building of a submarine tunnel from England to France has not fallen through as some suppose. New plans have been made. The company formed for its construction have abandoned Dover as the place of commencement, and propose to commence the descent to the base of the tunnel at St. Margaret's Bay near Kearnsey Station, on the London and Chatham Railway. This is about three miles from Dover and within range of the fortifications at the latter port. It will not open out as near the shore line as at first proposed, but will run inland by a gradual ascent about three miles and then proceed along the Alkham valley to Dover, a detour of about five miles from Shakespeare's Cliff. The change has been made to meet the objection that troops might be landed from the continent through the tunnel and that thus the now "tight little island" could be invaded by foreigners. The tunnel is to be built and the sea-sickness of the short but generally rough trip from Dover to Calais avoided. It is a bold project, worthy of the present age of great enterprises and skilful engineering.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

THOUSANDS of years ago the Divine fiat went forth, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, of him also shall man's blood be shed." This has passed into human laws and has been embodied in most of the codes of civilized nations. He who unlawfully takes human life forfeits his own, according to both divine and man-made enactments, and experience has

shown that it is for the interest of mankind. The only atonement a murderer can offer for his crime, is the shedding of his own blood in expiation. This is "blood atonement," about which so much has been said to prejudice the public mind against the "Mormons."

There are some persons of so tender a frame of mind that they cannot endure the idea of shedding the blood of even a dangerous malefactor. They have more sympathy for the criminal than for the victims of his blood guiltiness. They would slobber over a convicted murderer, elevate him into a hero, move heaven and earth to prevent his proper punishment, and drop no tear over the life he has extinguished or the misery he has caused to the bereaved. They cry out against revenge. But in the death penalty for murder, revenge does not figure at all. The protection of society and the magnifying of the law are objects in view, not retaliation.

Some States and communities have been so influenced by the sentimentalists as to abolish the death penalty altogether. In no instance has the change produced good results. Switzerland tried it and found that it would not work. So with some of the States of the Federal Union. On this the Philadelphia American has the following:

"Statistics show that the abolition of capital punishment in murder cases works as badly in Maine as in Michigan. In 1870, the convicts undergoing life-imprisonment for murder were six per cent. of the whole number; in 1876, 10 per cent.; in 1882, 25 per cent. Nearly forty men are now in prison under this sentence, and the number bids fair to go on growing. With every increase, the moral effect of the punishment is diminished—for crime, like every other sort of misery, likes companionship to keep it in countenance.

It is rather curious that, with the decline of the belief in everlasting punishment in the future life, grows the unwillingness to pass the worst criminals on to what people now profess to regard as another stage of probation. Is it because people doubt the validity of their own reasoning, that, like Voltaire and Diderot, they feel no certainty that there is no endless hell, and therefore incline to act as though there were one? Or is it that both the disbelief in hell and the disuse of capital punishment have the same root,—more vivid appreciation of physical suffering than of moral degradation?

It will be found that in those States where the death penalty remains upon the statute books but is not enforced in practice, murders are frequent and human life is not protected with anything like the sanctity that should surround it. Murderous persons generally have a strong regard for their own necks, and having much of the brute in them need the terrors of the extreme penalty as a standing restraint. Experience is demonstrating that the Divine fiat is founded in reason, and adapted to the necessities of a world yet in moral darkness, and subject to human passion and the influence of that Evil One whose work is destruction and who is the foe of the life natural as well as the life spiritual.

A NON-"MORMON" ON ANTI-POLYGAMY.

LEWISTON, Idaho,
January 11th, 1883.

Editor Deseret News:

There seems to be a great deal of pother about you marrying folks. I do not seem to be up with the times. Probably my early education was not properly conducted, at all events I do not understand half I hear about the Mormons and the Edmunds bill and the Utah Commission. I have just as much faith in Joseph's dream, or Old Hilkiah's find as I have in Smith's plates, but I like to see fair play and no favor. From what little I can grasp of the matter, I infer that we outsiders think you Mormons have too good a thing of it. And the proper thing for us to do is to clip your wings. Am I about right?

I see by the papers that our fair ladies even have been holding meetings in Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco, for the purpose of remonstrating, or some such foolishness. Why bless their souls, do they not know that there is as much polygamy to the square foot in every

city from New Brunswick to Lower California as there is in Salt Lake City? If they do not, their husbands must be sly old rakes. Of course it is not called polygamy, but then we do not always say spade when we mean spade. But we have the advantage of you, we do not marry our other wives and give them our names, and support their children and take care of them when the bloom fades from their cheeks. Ah, no! When time robs them of their charms, we do with them like we do with our old horses, we either turn them out to rustle for themselves, or what is worse, let some lower brute take them. So, you see Mr. Mormon, we have the decided advantage of you marrying gentry.

But still I can not see what those chaps in Congress have to say against you. How many of them do you suppose, at a rough guess, have an extra wife or two acting as clerks in the different departments, or in other words how many female clerks do you bet are not kept mistresses to some Hon. moralist, who spend their time framing bills to catch the twin relic out.

Then I am completely grieved at the clergy, they surely ought not to complain. Why, Sir, if I were a preacher of a certain sort, I should not care if I never got married. Why they have more flowers to buzz among than any bee in the hive, and they are all drones at that. Why what comparison is there between being married to four or five wives that one must stick to, and being a priest with a convent full of nuns to comfort?

Well, let it pass, I am not well informed that is evident, for I cannot get the rights of it anyhow. Now the churches cannot say too much for Solomon—they say he was the wisest of men—they quote his proverbs, at least they say he said them—they sing—no, I mistake—they do not sing his songs. Well he had a large temple full of wives. Then his father was much married, and the clergy preach about him and they sing his songs. Now why do they abuse you?

Next I do not see that the glorious Constitution of the U. S. gives Congress any municipal power in Territories. It does confer municipal and police authority in the District of Columbia expressly. But I do not see that municipal power is conferred even by implication, in a Territory.

The Constitution says: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States." Note the language: "to dispose of and make rules respecting, not laws for but rules respecting the territory as property, not as a colony of people to be governed, but simply as a piece of property to be 'disposed of.'" Now I apprehend that it requires a very crooked, twisting, stretching construction to make the clause quoted confer municipal authority, and I believe when Congress delegates municipal functions to a territorial organization, that it has delegated a power that it does not possess. I further believe that every colony that forms itself in a Territory, that is, without the boundary lines of any State, has within itself all the elements and attributes of sovereignty so far as its municipal affairs are concerned and that Congress has control of the [?] only and that the needful rules and regulations refer only to the proprietary rights of the United States, as regards the soil. Emerson says you can not raise me up unless you stand on higher ground. Do we occupy loftier ground than you? Who has the right to define right or wrong? Who are the infallible members of society in this nineteenth century? Who has the attribute that the clergy assert belongs to God alone, that of judging? You have the same right to dictate to us that some of us claim to have of dictating to you. Why, these very howlers are forever wrangling among themselves as to right and wrong.

I think that we had better attend to our own affairs and try to become honest and virtuous ourselves, before we seek for objects for our reformatory theories.

Yours respectfully,
A. Non.

THE DEAD CREEDS OF CHRISTENDOM.

WE clip the annexed paragraph from the Philadelphia American:

"New York preachers vie with one another in progressive thinking,

if not in pulpit sensationalism. One of them said last Sunday that "old creeds were constantly disappearing and that new ones were springing up. There were political, industrial, and social creeds as well as religious. Creeds were cradles for intelligence, not coffins. No combination of men in the nineteenth century could formulate a lasting creed. A creed was dead when it no longer emitted inspiration, light or life. Dead creeds were stumbling blocks, and, upheld by bigotry and fanaticism did infinite mischief. The metaphysical portion of all creeds was dead. The theory that the fall of Adam entailed eternal death on the human race was a dead creed. So was the theory that the Divine laws were so strict that no one could obey them except by appropriating Christ's righteousness by faith. It was a dead creed that heathen, infante, and idiots could not be saved because they did not know and accept Christ. The middle of the seventeenth century was the end of the creed-making period. A time would come when one harmonious creed would prevail throughout the world."

According to the above all the creeds of modern Christendom are dead, for they no longer emit or receive inspiration. A living creed is progressive. We do not mean by this that it changes so as to deny any of its formerly established principles, but that it receives and imparts added truth as fast as its adherents are prepared to receive them. The creeds of the churches are fixed and final. When people advance beyond their dogmas a new sect becomes necessary, and this in turn has to be rejected with further light, because it is bound by a certain number of articles, or definitions, or declarations of doctrine.

It is true that no combination of men in this country can formulate a lasting creed. But neither could they in any age. Every creed that is made by men, no matter how wise or learned they may be in the things of this world, is bound to perish. No creed but that which is divine will endure. And that will never be tied up in a definite number of propositions or dogmas. It will be progressive. But the truths added to it will not be destructive of previously revealed doctrines. Truth is not contradictory of itself. Principles may be revealed from God which may be imperfectly understood or not made known at once in their fulness, and greater light may correct improper conceptions, but there will be no dogma in a divine creed to discard or principle to throw away as erroneous. Yet the Almighty suits special instructions, commandments and counsels to the age and people for whom they are revealed, and they may not be applicable to future generations. But His doctrines are eternal truths, and can never become dead or obsolete.

The theories named in the quoted paragraph above are dead because they are not divine. They were the inventions of men. True, they were taught as part of the "Christian" faith, but neither Christ nor His Apostles proclaimed them as part of the gospel. Unauthorized ministers deduced them from an incorrect understanding of the dead letter of Scripture, but they are all opposed to the living word of God and the true doctrine of redemption. No man but Adam will be judged for Adam's transgression. Christ's righteousness will not suffice for any other person, no matter how much faith he may have, for all will have to answer for their own deeds done in the body. Infants will not be rejected of God at all, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven," and all who have arrived at the years of accountability and have not heard the gospel of Christ in the flesh, will hear it in the spirit state, so that every man and woman who has descended from Adam, will at some time have an opportunity to accept or reject Christ.

The contrary of this is to be found in human creeds, but not in the doctrine of Christ. A lasting creed must be a divine creed. The time is at hand when a harmonious creed will prevail in all the world. It will be so because God has revealed its fundamentals, and will add line upon line and precept upon precept, as experience and obedience prepare His children for their reception. And all that he reveals will harmonize, each principle with the others. Accompanying them will be the divine spirit making them clear to all who

receive and obey them. The remnants of the dead creeds will be swept away as demolished monuments of human folly, and mankind will learn the great truths that the things of God cannot be discerned but by the spirit of God, and that it is in vain the people worship, being taught by the precepts of men.

We are happy and thankful in the knowledge that God has commenced the revelation of a creed, harmonious in itself and in accord with all that he has formerly made manifest, and that though it is now, like the Divine Master, "despised and rejected of men," it will become known and understood of all nations, and while sects crumble and dead creeds are buried out of sight, the living truth of God will arise and shine and send forth its celestial light till the earth is flooded with its glory, and all people shall bow the knee to the Prince of Righteousness and shall know God from the least even unto the greatest of them. This is the age of iconoclasm, but it is also the day of a living creed that grows with man's capacities and is adapted to all his necessities. Let the images of man's fabrication be destroyed, and in their place shall stand a Church established by divine power that will never perish. Unwise people now deride it and call it "Mormonism," but ere long they will revere it as the work of the Eternal, the depository of an everlasting creed, the guide and glory of all who wish to walk in the never-fading light of truth.

A SIMPLE ERROR vs. WILFUL FALSEHOODS.

A FEW days ago we departed from our usual course and noticed an attack upon one of the leading men in the "Mormon" Church, made by an obscure anti-"Mormon" journal which is lingering out a miserable existence at Ogden, under the name of the Pilot. In doing so we fell into one slight error. In order to acknowledge this and set the matter right, it becomes necessary to pay a little more attention to the ribald and mendacious little Ogden Pirate.

A number of rabid and ridiculous statements were published by that sheet as a report of remarks by Apostle Brigham Young at "the last Semi-annual Conference at Salt Lake." We denied the accuracy of the report, stated that no such remarks had ever been uttered by that gentleman in any public meeting, and stated further, that he was not present at the last Stake Conference in this city, and did not address the congregation at the last Semi-annual Conference of the Church.

The Pirate now comes back at us with a blackguard letter from a sixth-rate alleged attorney, in which a flood of Billingsgate is let loose because the statement that Elder Young did not address the congregation at the last Semi-annual Conference happens to be a mistake. The error occurred in this way. We had the file of the DESERET EVENING NEWS examined to find our report of the Apostle's discourse, and were informed that the conference minutes contained no mention of his remarks. The Conference minutes usually appear on the second page of this paper; if not, they are generally placed on the first page. The first and second pages of the DESERET NEWS for the days of the Conference were carefully looked over, and no remarks of Elder Young's appearing there, we stated that he did not speak in public on that occasion. We now find that the report of Friday afternoon's meeting was inserted on the fourth page of Saturday's NEWS, the report of Friday morning's meeting appearing on the second page of the same issue, and that is way it was overlooked. Elder Young did speak on that occasion, and following is the report of his remarks as published.

ELDER BRIGHAM YOUNG

Addressed the Conference. He spoke of the assurance with which our Elders go forth and testify to the truths and revelations which they know to be of God, and yet the wise men of the world regard those testimonies as very presumptuous. He deplored the unbelief of the world who refuse to receive the principles our Elders preach, or compare them with the Bible, which most people profess to believe in as