This interest has also been exhibited by their efforts to gather up genealogical data concerning their progenitors. In this pursuit many of them have traveled thousands of miles by sea and land, visiting churches, offices of registration, depositories of records, libraries and many other available sources of information. This research has been greatly aided by the publication during the last half century of genealogical books and articles relating to early American families, many of which have lineal descendants in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Hence you will see why I am interested in literature of this character. The vicarious work to which I have alluded as an important feature of the faith of the Saints is, from the standpoint of the latter, purely beneficent and benevolentand even from the point of view of those who have no belief in its efficacy it must appear to be of that character so far as relates to the sincerity and devotion of those who engage in it. It has involved an amount of labor and a degree of expenditure of which those not familiar with it can form only a meager conception.

The foregoing explanation will perhaps be sufficient to show that the faith of the Mormon people is not contracted, but rests upon a sublimely comprehensive basis. One of the burning religious questions of the day is whether or not the dead who departed without a knowledge of the Gospel will, under the banner of Christ, have a chance of salvation after death. Such innovators as Dr. Briggs support the affi mative side of this subject and are therefore said to be leading out from the petrified religious dogmas which have hampered human thought and action for centuries. But, as you will perhaps observe, even these modern image-breakers must take a seat more than half a century in the rear of the Mormon Prophet and people.

RAISING WRECKED SHIPS.

It is now more than a month since the steamer City of New York—not the Atlantic liner once known by that name, but a fine steamship engaged in Pacific coast traffic—went ashore on the rocks outside of San Francisco harbor. The rocks pierced the hull of the vessel in several places and held her fast. Strong and persistent efforts were made to float the ship, but all to no avail; she was too firmly imbedded on the submarine crags to be lifted off. The vessel has showa remarkable strength of construction in withstanding the force of the waves against her for such a length of time. The holes in her hull have been enlarged the past few days by the shaking received from the storm, and she has settled so that there is no longer any hope of preventing her going to pieces. She was built at the Roach shipyards on the Delaware, and the manner in which she was held together is a high compliment to the quality of the workmanship which was bestowed on her when built in 1875.

The most improved methods for getting a vessel off the rocks were used in this instance, but the fact of a very large piece of rock getting into the fore part of the hull was more than could be overcome by the means at hand. Had the ship been saved under such circumstances it would have been regarded as a great triumph of skill over even the remarkably successful work with the North German Lloyd steamship Elder, which went on the rocks on the Isle of Wight about two years ago. In that case the vessel was wrecked in a storm and fog, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the passengers and mail were got ashore. The Elder was at first regarded as a hopeless wreck, but when the storm abated she was found to be sound except for the hole in the bottom, through which had pierced the rock that held her in position.

It was then that efforts were put forth to lift the vessel off and carry her into dock across the Solent. Southampton companies were engaged for the work, but met with little success till a company of German wreckers was put on, when the vessel was soon tilted up by pumping and other means till a canvas bottom was provided, and the vessel was safely taken into dock and repaired. In the case of the City of New York there were too many rocks to get the canvas under.

This task of raising ships calls for much skill and technical knowledge on the part of those engaged in the work, and the diffusion in late years of knowledge regarding the principles of dynamics has been the means, in connection with modern mechanical contrivances, of saving millions of dollars' worth of property. Lifting and saving a ship that is wrecked on a rocky coast is an undertaking of great magnitude, and the success which attends this branch of business is a high compliment to the mechanical ingenuity of the age. The case of the failure to save the steamer at San Francisco is more than likely to result in bringing out some contrivance that will meet the difficulties there presented and draw a closer limit to the powers of the ocean over its partially disabled victims.

FINE HEMPEN THREAD.

An invention which has been recently perfected by two natives of Japan may prove of considerable benefit to the United States. It consists in the production of fine thread from nettle hemp. This plant, from the bark of which the thread is manufactured, grows abundantly and in a wild state in Japan, and may be easily cultivated in different parts of the United States. If the claims for the new production should prove correct, it is likely to supersede to a great extent the finest silken thread.

The patentee of the process is Itagaki Hokotaro, son of Count Itagaki. The technical method by which it was developed was elaborated chiefly by Miyazaki Saburo, of the Hokkaido hemp factory. Mr. Itagaki was the instigator of the efforts, however, his attention having been directed to it by the reputation of a noted French silk manufacturer. This led to experiments, and the two Japanese, after a series of trials extending over a period of several years, succeeded in obtaining thread about the fineness of No. 40.

Messrs Itagaki and Miyazaki were not satisfied with this result. They were still far behind the French, whom they had set out to equal. They continued their efforts, therefore, to devise a machine for turning out finer thread. Last spring a well known English spinning expert made a visit to Japan, and the persevering inventors were filled with expectations of learning from him something that would aid them in their dilemma.

In this, however, they were disappointed. Instead of receiving encouragement and instruction, the Britisher brusquely informed them that it was hopeless for them to attempt to produce from hemp thread as fine as that obtained from silk by the French process, or to surpass the No. 40 which they had made. When they assured him that in their experiments they got as fine as No. 60, he gave them the understanding that in his view their statement was beyond the fact.

This discouraging information did not, however, put a stop to the efforts of the inventors. They continued their experiments with greater zeal and a determination to prove that they were right in their thread-making theories. Their perseverance bore fruit within a few months, and after numerous trials at the Hokkaido factory they at last succeeded in obtaining from nettle hemp threads of the fineness of No. 100—a fineness that is said to excel even the best French production. They are now engaged in the manufacture of the article and seem to be a fair way to reap a good financial reward for their tireless and intelligent exertions.

The nettle hemp is claimed to be three or four times as strong as silk and not at all inferior in point of luster, so that in its manufacture into equally as fine threads it is likely to prove a formidable rival to the silk business. As the hemp can be grown without difficulty in the United States, at a much less cost than silk can be produced, there appears to be no good reason why some enterprising American may not obtain the secret of the manufacture and build up a local industry which will successfully compete with the importation of silken thread from France.

FOR POTATO PATRIOTS.

The report of a general shortage in the potato crop throughout the country is a species of information that excites no special wonder, accustomed as we are to seeing fluctuations in even the most reliable products, wherein the excessive yield or acreage of one is invariably accompanied by a reduction in quantity or inferiority in quality of another. In other words, we have learned the significance of the terms "wheat years," "corn years," "cotton years," etc., etc., and have come thoroughly to understand that such designation implies the extraordinary success of one crop only at the sacrifice of one or all of the others.

Without undertaking to say, at this moment, which particular cereal or vegetable may claim the honors of yield and excellence for 1893, we are in a position to say that the homely, groveling, earthy, yet at some times succulent and at all times nutritious