

## EDITORIALS

## WILKES' ANTARCTIC CONTINENT.

CAPTAIN FRED. D. STUART, of Washington, D. C., writes to the *Star* of that city, in regard to the statement of Lieut. Hynes, of the British discovery ship *Challenger*, that "no such land exists in the vicinity of the South Pole as Commodore Wilkes claimed to have seen in 1840." Captain Stuart was a member of Wilkes' Expedition. Divesting Captain Stuart's letter of personalities, we may give the following as the material portion of its substance—that there can be but a shadow of a doubt that land was discovered, as claimed by the Wilkes expedition, and by the officers and men on board of three of the vessels composing the squadron—the *Peacock*, *Vincennes* and *Porpoise*, and at the same time, the 16th day of January, 1840; which the log books and the journals of the officers distinctly and emphatically state; that this land was called Ringold's Knoll, located in lat. 67 deg. south, long. 157 deg. 46 min. east; that January 19 the well defined outline of land, not less than 3,000 feet high, loomed up in the not very far distance, towering far above the tallest iceberg, some of them not less than 200 feet high, the latitude of the ship *Peacock* being at the time 66 deg. 37 min. south, longitude 153 deg. 40 min. east, the peak bearing southwest; that Jan. 30, the officers and crew of the *Vincennes*, being in what Admiral Wilkes named Piner's Bay, latitude 66 deg. 45 min. south longitude 140 deg. 02 min. east, and on soundings of 30 fathoms, hard bottom, not more than half a mile from many volcanic rocks projecting above the surface of the water, there was plainly in view a range of high land, stretching east and west, some sixty miles; that sketches were carefully made at every point of discovery by competent persons on board of each of the vessels, and these, together with the astronomical observations taken at the time to determine position, were critically examined and compared, and in every essential point found to agree; that the vessels of the squadron traversed the Antarctic region, in close proximity to the icy barrier, and among icebergs, from the 165th meridian east to the 98th meridian east, a distance of about seventeen hundred nautical miles, and that frequently observations were made on high well defined ranges and peaks of land, as on the 1st and 14th of February, by the *Vincennes*; that Lieut. Hynes had one ship (100 men) and perhaps at most three to five chronometers, while the U. S. expedition had three vessels (400 men) and twenty chronometers; that in 1842 officers of the expedition, who had kept the records, affirmed, under oath, that all the discoveries claimed to have been made by the *Peacock*, *Vincennes* and *Porpoise* had been made, and Commodore Wilkes' character for veracity was declared unimpaired; and that when half a dozen other English navigators go over the route of the American explorers, and each verify the other's observations, and the whole are found to agree with Lieut. Hynes, that Wilkes discovered no land in the vicinity of the South Pole, then it will be time enough to doubt our claim to the discovery of the Antarctic continent.

## THE ST. LOUIS MISSISSIPPI BRIDGE.

ST. LOUIS had a great day on the 9th of June, when the first railway train passed over the great bridge which crosses the Mississippi at that city, said bridge being, according to the *Missouri Democrat*, the "finest structure the world ever saw."

Gen. Sherman drove home the last spike, handling "the heavy sledge hammer with wonderful dexterity." The first train to cross, consisting of a locomotive, baggage car and two passenger coaches, belonged to the St. Louis, Vandalia

and Terre Haute Railroad Company, and proceeded from the east side of the river across to St. Louis. Says the *Democrat*—

"The train proceeded slowly over the beautiful iron trestle work, and climbed up the passage way and so along until the turbulent Mississippi shone like a sheet of silver beneath. The passengers were wild with delight at the scene spread out on either side. Not a jar nor a quiver as the staunch network of iron and steel held its living freight. On went the engine, amid the screams of the whistle and the shouts of the people above and below. It passed the west end, and looking down Main street, the passengers saw on both sides of the way a delighted crowd of citizens who cheered and waved their handkerchiefs. The train entered the tunnel, and as daylight disappeared lamps were lighted. Now, as the train passed Fourth street and the engine's whistle brought out the startled neighborhood, the train stops, passes on again and lands passengers between Fifth and Sixth Sts., not far from the Lindell Hotel.

The levee presented a splendid appearance as the cars rolled into the city, and clerks and salesmen rushing out of the stores boarded the train, bound to have a ride into St. Louis, leaving hats and coats behind.

Among the passengers, besides Gen. Wm. T. Sherman, were various officials connected with the bridge and railroads and distinguished citizens of St. Louis and vicinity.

Captain James B. Eads conceived the design of the bridge and superintended its construction, assisted by Col. Henry Flad. William McPherson, lately deceased, Dr. William Taussig, Genard B. Allen, and James H. Britton, citizens of St. Louis, threw their private fortunes into the enterprise, after which its success was assured.

The tunnel is expected to be completed in a few weeks, and it is said to be clear that the revenues of the bridge and tunnel will be amply sufficient to make the fortunes of those who invested means in the enterprise.

**HEAT AND MORTALITY.**—The medical maxim that heat is life and cold is death appears not to be true, at least only to a very partial extent, judging by the following from the *New York Times*—

"Evidently nothing kills in this community so surely as excessive heat. The brief spell of tropical weather left its impress on the vital statistics of the week ending May 16, in the record of fifty deaths above the average of the season—while the low temperature which has prevailed during the week ending yesterday has reduced the deaths to fifty below the average. With all its inconstancy the Spring has not been an unhealthy one, and our average death-rate for the last few months will compare favorably with the recent average of the great cities of England—twenty-five per 1,000 per annum. In the disparity between births and deaths, however, the comparison is decidedly unfavorable to New York. In every million of people in England the annual excess of births over deaths is about 15,000. So far as can be judged from recent returns, the annual deaths in New York exceed the births by about 2,500. The reproductive power of our population fails to make up for the natural ratio of decrease, and but for immigration our numbers would suffer a steady diminution."

This terrible consumption of life in New York is incontrovertible evidence that there is something in American city civilization yet very sadly imperfect, and reminds one of the observation of the pre-ent Lord Derby that the shadow cast by a large city is in many respects a very dark one.

**THE BENDERS.**—We have not heard much about the Benders of late, and perhaps some of our sensation-loving readers may be hungering and thirsting for a little more news of that interesting family. The following from the

Winona, Minnesota, *Republican* of June 10, is the latest we have seen—

"After all the arrests that have been made of persons supposed to belong to the Bender family, who committed so many murders in Kansas, all of the family are still at large. The person arrested in Utah recently as the elder Bender, and who, it was reported, had been satisfactorily identified, proves to be a demented old man by the name of Kosh. The county attorney for Labette county, Kansas, publishes a description of the senior Bender, in which the criminal is described as a man having an intelligent countenance and resembling in no way the vagrants so frequently taken for members of the Bender family. He adds that all of the Benders, notwithstanding their fiendish natures, appear agreeable and pleasant in their manners, and as they are supplied with money, it is not likely that they will be found acting the part of fools or vagrants."

**DIPHTHERIA EPIDEMIC IN NEW YORK.**—The *New York Sun* of June 6 says that since the beginning of the year, in New York and adjacent cities, diphtheria has been epidemic, the mortality of the malady having been more than double that recorded for the same period last year. The Health Board's records show that since the 27th of December, 1873, 603 persons have died of diphtheria, as against 268 in the corresponding period of 1872-3. The disease is attributed to the long-continued humidity of the atmosphere. The attending physicians describe the malady as a pustulous ulceration of any mucous membrane. The point in which it is usually developed is the throat, where it forms a false membrane, and, unless checked in time, this causes a closing of the air passages. Says the *Sun*—

"Physicians differ concerning the treatment of the disease, but all agree that as yet there is no specific remedy for it. Some prescribe an inhalation of lime vapor, or warm vapor and strong doses of tincture of chloride of iron and sulphate of quinine; others prefer an application of nitrate of silver to the ulcerated part; still others favor a disinfectant application, such as carbolic acid or permanganate of potash. Alcoholic stimulants are strongly recommended, as the disease is always accompanied with extreme exhaustion. A liquid diet—beef tea or rich cream—is generally used."

The Australian "perfect cure" for this dreadful disease, as related in the *NEWS* a few weeks ago, is a few drops of sulphuric acid diluted in water.

**ANOTHER DESPERADO.**—Since the capture of Tiburcio Vasquez, the California free-booter, Cleovara Chavis, his "blood-thirsty lieutenant," has been considered the most dangerous man at large in the State. Governor Booth has offered \$2,000 for his capture. It is stated that Chavis is engaged in gathering the scattered forces of the infamous gang of Vasquez, to resume the plundering and murdering business. The *San Francisco Chronicle* of June 13 says—

"Chavis was born in San Juan, Monterey county, and is now 23 years of age. His father was, a few years since, sent to the insane asylum. Under treatment he recovered soundness of mind, and is now engaged in herding sheep not far from Stockton. His mother and sister live near Hollister. Before he formed the acquaintance of Vasquez Chavis had the reputation of being an inoffensive, industrious young man, but from association with Tiburcio he imbibed a love of adventure and the latter, after instilling into the mind of his younger confederate an intense hatred of the Americans, and the idea that they are the usurpers of the birth-right of the native Californians, found in him a brave and reckless auxiliary in his boldest schemes."

"Last week Chavis spent two or three days in the mountains north of the New Idria mines and among his countrymen declared that for him there was no greater delight than to kill a white man, and that

he would do something in that line before long. Chavis has the reputation of being possessed of more courage than Vasquez had, without the caution and cunning of the latter, which enabled him to so long elude capture. All the information which the officers engaged in breaking up this gang of bandits could obtain led them to expect Chavis to fight to the death, even if cornered, while as to his superior, they looked for a bloodless capture if they could only get the 'drop' on him."

"Chavis is about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches in height and heavy set. His complexion is quite light for a Spaniard, and he has but a few straggling hairs on his face."

**"ROTTEN BOROUGHs."**—The *Omaha Herald* thus takes up a current slur upon a neighboring Territory—

"They call Colorado a 'rotten borough' down East with remarkable unanimity. But if our neighboring Territory is a 'rotten borough,' what in the name of his Sattanic Majesty is the State of Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia?"

Our Omaha contemporary's New York namesake rejoices in the use of the phrase in question concerning Colorado. Colorado is out of debt, and at the last reports had a handsome balance in the treasury. Can New York say as much? If Colorado is a "rotten borough," what can the worst governed city in the world be rightly termed?

**IOWA GRASSHOPPERS.**—Iowa has grasshoppers in vast numbers, and with disastrous effect, more or less, in Pottawatomie, Crawford, Kosuth, Humboldt, and Clay counties. In those counties devastated last year, it is said none have appeared this year.

**BIT HER OWN NOSE OFF.**—There must be truth in the titular phrase "Woman an Enigma." The English House of Commons has been discussing the subject of increasing the punishment of husbands who whip their wives, and a number of very amusing narratives have been elicited, some of them reminding one of the old idea that he who interferes between husband and wife goes between the blades of a pair of shears, and may expect to get hurt. In this parliamentary discussion, among the narrations offered, cases were abundant where wives, being outrageously abused, turned savagely against meddlers who came to the rescue; but the marital climax was capped by a woman whose nose had been bitten off by her husband. The man was arrested and brought to trial, and when the woman was put on the stand to testify she electrified bench and bar by swearing that she had bitten her nose off herself.

After that who would have the temerity to interfere in a case of quarrelsome connubiality unless he did not mind having his own nasal protuberance incontinently bitten off?

**PROBATE COURTS AND COMMON LAW.**—In the presentation of the Poland Utah bill in the U. S. House of Representatives, June 2, Mr. Poland remarked, concerning Probate Courts and their jurisdiction—

"The third section relates to the respective jurisdictions of the courts and giving jurisdiction to the district courts which are held by the judges appointed by the President, and taking away the jurisdiction of the probate courts; that is, confining the jurisdiction of these probate courts to the proper business of the settlement of estates."

"And I think the gentleman who sits here as Delegate of that Territory knows as well as I know the Supreme Court have agreed upon a decision, and it was only deferred in consequence of the pendency of this bill, wherein they have decided the territorial Legislature had no authority to confer this kind of jurisdiction which these probate courts have heretofore exercised; that the conferring of general, legal, civil, and criminal jurisdiction upon the courts was a usurpation and their acts are void. We provide in

this bill for taking away that jurisdiction from these probate courts, but at the same time we have taken care to validate the proceedings which have become executed."

Upon the imposition of the English common law upon this Territory the same gentleman said—

"The seventh section provides the common law of England as defined by the courts of last resort in those parts of the United States where the common law prevails shall be the rule in that Territory. The necessity for that, Mr. Speaker, grows out of this fact, this Territory was acquired from Mexico, and therefore it may be a very grave question, though comparatively an unsettled Territory when we acquired it, whether the common law prevails unless adopted by special act of Congress."

**COMPULSORY EDUCATION.**—On the 1st of July the California "Compulsory Education Law" goes into effect. It provides that every child in the State living within one mile of a public school house, and being over eight and under fourteen years of age, not instructed at home or in some private school, shall attend the public school for at least two-thirds of the term during which it is open in the school year, and that at least twelve weeks of such attendance shall be regular and consecutive. But the sickness or poverty of parents, or the bodily and mental infirmity of the children, are made valid excuses for non-compliance with the law. The penalty for the neglect to comply with the law is a fine of \$20 for the first offence, and \$50 for each subsequent one.

**G. S. L. AND C. R. R.**—In the U. S. House of Representatives, May 29, Mr. Dunnell, by unanimous consent, reported from the Committee on the Public Lands a bill (H. R. No. 3,587) to incorporate the Great Salt Lake and Colorado River Railway Company, and to grant to said company a right of way through the public lands; which was read a first and second time, ordered to be printed, and recommended, not to be brought back on a motion to reconsider.

## WHAT TWO HERALDS SAY.

THE *New York Herald* thus comments on recent occurrences in this city—

"The municipal authorities of Salt Lake City, the Mormons, in fact, have had a tilt with the military authority of the United States on the question of arresting soldiers, and have been beaten. In a case that came up where a magistrate of the Territory refused to deliver up a soldier who was imprisoned, General Morrow, acting upon the decision of the Judge Advocate, and his own sense of duty, sent a company of cavalry, battered down the prison door and released the man. The Mormons, it appears, were stunned by this exercise of federal authority, but the Gentiles and those who are chafing under Mormon rule rejoiced."

The *Omaha Herald* talks more sensibly thus—

"The civil authorities in Salt Lake City surrendered a soldier guilty of assault upon a civil officer to Gen. Morrow who marched a detachment of soldiers to the jail to release him from arrest. But they are Mormons, you know. How would Gen. Ord get along if he were to attempt such an outrage upon the city authorities of Omaha?"

The "Mormons" have had no "tilt with the military authority of the United States," and do not mean to have, nor with the civil authority either, if it can be honorably avoided. We never heard of any "Mormons" being "stunned" over that "exercise of federal authority" in this city last week. People are not in the habit of being "stunned" over what everybody expects to take place, over what they know has been pre-arranged and carefully brought about. The unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of the Territory, given this