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SALT LAKE CITY, FEB. 4, 1904.

DESERT NEWS PHONES.

Persons desiring to communicate by telephone with any department of the Desert News, will save themselves and this establishment a great deal of annoyance if they will take time to notice these numbers: For the Chief Editor's office No. 74, 3 rings. For Desert News Book Store, 74, 2 rings. For City Editor and Reporters, 359, 3 rings. For Business Manager, 359, 3 rings. For Business Office, 359, 2 rings.

LAW, AND RELIGION CLASSES.

It is amusing to watch the efforts at reasoning of disgruntled persons who cannot endure the assembling of "Mormon" children, after school hours, to receive instructions in religion. An anonymous writer in last Sunday's Tribune, who professes to be "a teacher in this State," advances some queer and self-contradictory notions against the religion classes, which have been permitted by trustees in some country districts to meet in the schoolhouses when they were not engaged by the schools proper. But no definite objection is urged that affords the weight of a ton's feather in the scale against the good done by these classes.

To begin with, they are not asked for or allowed if they in any manner interfere with the district schools. Should they do so, the wrong must be corrected or they must be stopped. If school books are "thrown about and damaged," as asserted, there are evidently two faults; one is the leaving of such books on desks after school is closed, and the other is the damage done in such cases. No instance of this kind is cited so that it can be investigated, and we are inclined to believe it is a mere invention of the objector's. But allowing it to be a fact, the evil can be easily remedied by requiring that proper care be taken of all district school supplies.

In one breath the objector tries to show that if a teacher in a religion class, that is "contrary to the spirit of the law and contract." In the next breath he (she), admits that "the teacher has his free agency to do whatever he may choose after his school duties are completed." The objection (?) is thus self-answered. There is nothing in the law or in a teacher's contract that forbids the work complained of.

The writer of the letter hopes the day will come soon "when school boards will close the schoolhouse doors on all gatherings which tend to interfere with the progress of the school." That's all right. Nobody that we have heard of wants it otherwise. If a religion class interferes in any way with "the progress of the school," let complaint be made in that case and the wrong be remedied. That can be done without an endeavor by any sour-mouled bigot to stamp out the religion class that does not interfere with a district school.

Of course the paper that published the pointless letter gives it editorial endorsement, and tries to show that the religion classes in country districts, that are held after school hours for the convenience of children who desire to attend them, are "an extraneous use," that is improper, but has to admit that "it is not specifically forbidden by law." It also advances "the assumption that the Legislature meant to confine the purpose of the public schoolhouses to the exclusive use of the public schools." Its use of the word "assumption" in this case is appropriate. There is no reason for the position assumed. On the contrary, the law is clear that other uses were contemplated by the Legislature, for we find this provision in the school laws as to the power of the school board:

"It may permit a schoolhouse, when not occupied for school purposes, to be used for any purpose which will not interfere with the seating of other furniture or property, and shall make such charges for the use of the same as they may decide to be just; but for any use or privilege the district shall not be at any expense for fuel or otherwise." - Revised Statutes, Sec. 1523.

Thus the facts and the law are against the "assumption" of our contemporary, and disprove it into very thin and not very big air. The Legislature very properly left the matter in control of the trustees elected by the people, who would know of the needs of the people in the district, and see that there is no interference with the schools and no damage to school property, through the use of the schoolhouses for other than school purposes.

this and other large cities in the State from those in many rural districts. We never hear of religion classes in our Salt Lake city schoolhouses. And why? Not because of the "instant and indignant protest" which our neighbor thinks would be an inevitable consequence, but because there are buildings of another kind amply sufficient for the work. In districts where the large majority of the taxpayers desire it and the school board is willing, what harm will come to the schoolhouse, if a class is held in it outside of school hours for the instruction of such children as are willing to attend, in the primary principles of religion which cannot be lawfully taught in the schools?

Our contemporary exclaims in this connection: "Let the schoolhouses be kept free from sectarian and all improper influences." Nonsense! The SCHOOLHOUSES will not be hurt by religious influences. So long as the SCHOOLHOUSES are kept free from sectarian teachings the law will be honored and the purpose in view be accomplished. The notion that the schoolhouses are in danger from religion is a terror that no sane person will be started at. As the French would say: "It is to laugh." In early times in Utah schools were held in the meetinghouses erected by voluntary donations. Sometimes the funds were raised by an agreed tax as well as by contributions. Nobody complained at it and nobody was hurt thereby. The people who pioneered the way to the settlement of remote places, and their posterity, have some rights that should be respected. The religion classes for children are rendered necessary, in their view, by the exclusion of religion from the district schools. Where it is more convenient than elsewhere to hold those classes in the schoolhouses, even if they are now built by taxation, and the school boards are willing and the law is not violated, only narrow intolerance would object, and seek to make trouble about it. Nobody is injured by the use of a schoolhouse for the desired purpose, but a few small souls, who try to play dog-in-the-manger and sniff a scent of "Mormonism" in the movement, which irritates their nerves and stirs up their mental bile. Let the law be carefully complied with, and let no one be scared by the hooting of any kind of an owl.

THE SENATOR SMOOT CASE.

Winston's Weekly, a pungent paper published at Spokane, Washington, and edited by Patrick Henry Winston, has the following editorial in its issue of Jan. 30, 1904. While we are not responsible for its personal comparisons, we can but recognize its cogent reasoning, and we clip the article because we feel sure it will give pleasure to a large number of readers of the "News."

"The senate committee to which was referred the charges against Senator Smoot of Utah, has decided to investigate them, and hear testimony. The charges against Smoot are that he is a polygamist, and also an active officer of a church to which he acknowledges allegiance superior to that he owes to the United States government."

"It is admitted that he is not a polygamist. If he were that would be sufficient ground, under the Utah Enabling Act to exclude him from the senate. The only question, then, is whether a Mormon Apostle is prohibited from holding office under our government; whether belief in the Mormon religion is irreconcilable with American citizenship; whether a Mormon owes their church an allegiance which is in conflict with their allegiance to the government of the United States?"

"We believe all churches claim to be divinely appointed, and put God above country. All of them claim to represent God, and therefore all of them claim that the allegiance due them from their members is superior to their allegiance to their country. If this is not so, then they put country above God."

"To the extent that other churches demand allegiance from their members, so does the Mormon church, and no farther. It is true that the Mormon church claims to be the only true church, and therefore its members for office to other churches. So do all other churches. Designing politicians have been known to abandon the church of their fathers and wander after strange Gods for the purpose of bettering their political fortunes; and some, who have no religion, have been known to join churches in order to get church support. There is not a particle of difference in this respect between the Mormon church and the others."

"That the Mormon church is antagonistic to the government nobody believes. It would be a society of lunatics if it were. It brought Utah into the Union, with an enabling act that removes all doubt of its loyalty to the government. So far as Senator Smoot's religious belief is concerned, he is as much entitled to it as the rest of us are to ours. Senator Hoar, we understand, is a Unitarian. If so, he denies that Christ was the Son of God; he denies the truths of the Christian religion. Smoot believes in them. Senator Dubois, we believe, is an Episcopalian. If so, he believes in apostolic succession and denies the divine authority of any one to preach the Gospel except Episcopalianism. Senator Smoot is more liberal; he admits the right of any one to save souls. Senator Hanna, we understand, is a Presbyterian and believes that before the world was made certain men were predestined to damnation. Senator Smoot is more charitable; he concedes the efficacy of prayer and good works. Senator Heyburn, we believe, is a Methodist, and believes in sanctification; that is, that a man can become so holy that he can't get any holier. Senator Smoot, while doubting the efficacy of grace to go that far, is nevertheless willing to affiliate with the Idaho Senator. Senator Quay, we understand, is a Universalist and therefore a disbeliever in hell, while Senator Smoot, like Senator Tillman, believes in hell, a belief that is not absolutely inconsistent with loyalty to the flag. If we proscribe one sect today, what sect will the spirit of prescription next assail? It is because the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints claim the latest revelation that this attack, under the guise of morality, is made upon Smoot."

CRIME INCREASING.

It is noted that the last few years have presented an alarming increase in the number of crimes of all kinds. In the five years between 1898 and the end of 1903 suicides increased more than 30 per cent, and the number of suicides in 1903 was very nearly as great as the number of deaths resulting from all other crimes of violence. The increase in the number of crimes of violence resulting in death in the United States for the year 1903, was a little in

excess of 1 1/2 per cent as compared with 1902. At one time it was argued that hard times caused poverty, despair, suicide, robbery, and murder, but the years for which the above figures are quoted, were years of almost unparalleled prosperity, and there is no way of accounting for the increase than by a general tendency to degeneration. Disregard for divine law necessarily leads to contempt for human law, no matter how many laws are put on the statute book, or how Draconic they are; if they are held in contempt and enforced only fitfully, they will be broken without compunction.

As a fearful illustration of the depravity of our age can be mentioned the recent discovery in New York of a regular school of thieves. The "Fagin" of the gang has been arrested, and his method of working has been explained. He operates chiefly among school children, boys from between 6 and 12 years of age, and all the neighbors stood around and jeered. He and 12 years after going down ten feet, while in the town below it is necessary to dig a well forty feet deep to have it serviceable. And when the multitude saw this they said: "Well done."

Dr. Roux of the Pasteur Institute, Paris, is said to have made some experiments to ascertain the effects of radium on living animals. Some mice were confined in a cage in which a tube containing radium was suspended. After fourteen hours the hair of the mice came out. Later it grew in again, but of an entirely different color. Twenty days after the beginning of the experiment the mice died, apparently from paralysis.

The principal fads of the present day are the following, as discovered by a Chicago club of ladies: Yellow Journalism, authors with long names, side talks with girls, treatments to make women beautiful, fish dinners with live fish on the table, dinners for monkeys, the historic novel, books with rough edges, use of "forward" in books instead of "preface," turned up trousers, present shape of trousers, burnt wood, visiting Waldorf-Astoria in New York, the Annex in Chicago, the kangaroo walk, the athletic girl, compressed food tablets, the best breakfast food, the uncooked food notion, the soaked raw wheat craze, the peanut cure for indorinit, the anti-baking powder fad, the microbe in everything.

NOT JUST TO INDIANS.

Springfield Republican. Mr. Brostius cites one instance in which the state of California, relying upon the weakness of the Indian trust patent, has attempted taxes upon an Indian homestead whose entrance was technically defective, and the land bureau of the interior department has decided that a new patent cannot be issued, but the land is to be sold. A thrifty Indian who has built himself a house, has raised a fruit orchard now in bearing, has swine, fowl and horses, is to be deprived of all the fruits of his land, by the massive tax of the state, under the protection and indeed by the act of the secretary of the interior.

The Red Man and Healer.

How is an Indian to become a civilized individual man if he has no individual civilized chances? It would rob them of manhood and make paupers of emigrants coming to us from any country in the world to reserve and double-burialize them as we do our Indians. Wilkes Barre Leader. A civilized savage, returned to his uncivilized people, has nothing left to him but uncivilization. If the people of Pennsylvania can give all of the Indian graduates from the Carlisle school employment they will be aiding still further in the solution of this important question. Colonel Pratt says the Indian boys at Carlisle are in great demand as farm laborers. They are certainly great football players. No doubt they can be trained to make good mechanics. Give the Indian a lift.

Denison Herald.

Is it not enough that we shall take the lands of the Indians and hand them over to uncivilization? But we must encompass the Indian about with laws, rules and regulations, after depriving him of all legal rights, and thus turn him loose to cope with his fellows, equipped as would be an infant. It is a matter that cries out to American intelligence for relief. Flindreau Review. A ten line item in the daily papers tells of the meeting of two of the class of 1899 Yale college students, in an Omaha jail, recently, where they gave the old time Yale yell, and held a reunion. One of the men, a graduate of Carlisle or any other prominent Indian school a double headed column would hardly have been sufficient to inform the public of the fact. Oshkosh Times. There are some reservation Indians in this neck of the woods, and about once a year when the federal court meets we see some samples of these Indians in proper order, of the laws and rules of practice governing, and to illustrate by judicial precedents, the important subjects of New Trial and Appellate practice. The work appears to be a very exhaustive treatise on the subject under consideration, and the arrangement and presentation of the statutes relating to the subject are such as to enable the student to obtain a comprehensive view with but moderate effort. The indexes are complete, and add greatly to the usefulness of the work.

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The "News" acknowledged the receipt of A Treatise on Trial and Appellate Practice, by Thomas Carl Spelling, of the San Francisco bar. It is a work in two volumes, and the purpose of it, as stated in the preface, is "to place before the profession a full discussion, in proper order, of the laws and rules of practice governing, and to illustrate by judicial precedents, the important subjects of New Trial and Appellate practice." The work appears to be a very exhaustive treatise on the subject under consideration, and the arrangement and presentation of the statutes relating to the subject are such as to enable the student to obtain a comprehensive view with but moderate effort. The indexes are complete, and add greatly to the usefulness of the work.

The Improvement Era for February has for frontispiece a portrait of Hon. John Sharp. The article, "Joseph Smith as Scientist," by Dr. John A. Widtsoe, is continued. On the "Editor's Table" we notice a thoughtful article on "The Cause for Nerves" by Pres. Joseph F. Smith, in which the writer answers clearly and briefly some of the accusations made by the so-called Ministerial associations in this city. The table of contents is as follows: "Joseph Smith as Scientist," by Dr. John A. Widtsoe; "Pro Dox," a poem, George E. Blair; "The Masterpiece," by T. Green Richards; "The Omega Hours," by W. M. Smith; "The Last of the Maitens," a story of ancient Britain, Prof. Willard Don; "A Missionary's Farewell to Marguerite," a poem, Lydia

from what they did in Scott's time, one not nearly so pleasant.

To say that Bentler died from apoplexy and not from strangulation is not wholly unlike the reiterated assertion of Giteau that it was the bungling of the doctors in probing and not the bullet wound that killed President Garfield.

Pulmonic plague is said to be still raging in India. For some time the average number of deaths per week from this disease has been over 25,000. One week the deaths amounted to 29,647. It is estimated that since 1898, when the present siege began, over 1,000,000 have died from the plague.

A strange thing has happened in a Kansas town. A man started to dig a well on the crest of the highest hill in the place last week, and all the neighbors stood around and jeered. He and 12 years after going down ten feet, while in the town below it is necessary to dig a well forty feet deep to have it serviceable. And when the multitude saw this they said: "Well done."

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