

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

EDUCATION IN LARGE CITIES.

There seems to exist in the minds of many inhabitants of the outlying districts of the Territory, a prejudice against sending their children to Salt Lake City to attend school. This prejudice is based on the idea that many dangers and temptations, unknown to smaller towns, beset the student in the metropolis, leading him from a strict path of diligence and honor.

That this, however, is in a great degree a mistaken view has been proved by observation and experience. While it may be true that there are in Salt Lake City numerous places offering temptations, yet no village of any considerable size is without similar places. As to vice in general, where is there a city, town or village where the facilities for it are not as great as the people will make them? Is the percentage of immorality greater among the young people in Salt Lake City than in the smaller towns?

There is one truth to be considered—that in the metropolis of the Territory, vice is kept under stricter surveillance than is possible in places where the system of police is not so complete. Furthermore, iniquity dare not flaunt itself before the public for fear of the exercise of legitimate authority against it. If one would discover vice he must go to it, and to one so disposed, opportunities for indulgence will not be lacking anywhere. Moreover, the line of demarcation between the upright, the pure, and the law-abiding, and the vicious and lawless elements, is fixed and determined—crystallized into form by many years of strict supervision over the sources of wrong-doing. Such perfect classification has been proved practically impossible in newer and smaller communities. It may safely be said that thousands of men and women have lived for years in Salt Lake City and have never known the vicious element, so thoroughly have they been able to keep themselves aloof from it.

Two important facts render the rearing of a family (and therefore the care of school children) in Salt Lake City less troublesome and dangerous than in many smaller towns: First, the wholesome fear of danger instilled into the child from the first, which places him on his guard against going out at unseemly hours or into unseemly places; second, the absence of the spectacle, too frequently seen in towns and villages, of boys and men mingling together on street corners and at the doors of saloons, the younger drinking in the odors of tobacco and liquor, if not the substances themselves, and listening to the degrading stories and obscene jests of their elders. In tacitly the police regulations against vagrancy, street-loafing, etc., and a wholesome check upon these efficient schools of vice. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and the most striking example of such corruption is an idle crowd on a street corner or at a saloon door. The average student passes quickly through the streets of a large city from school to boarding place, with

no such seductive groups to draw him from his line of march. The slums are in secondary streets and back alleys; he need not see them unless he goes out of his way to do so.

On the other hand, the possible disadvantages to the youth are more than balanced by the advantages possessed by a large city with respect to education. School men generally agree that books are among the least important of educational agencies. Association with men and things is one of the most important elements. Both of these may be secured to much greater advantage in a large city than elsewhere. Public and private libraries, reading rooms, are of easy and cheap access, affording excellent facilities for securing the best thought of all ages. Contemporaneous thought is well represented in these libraries in the vast number of periodicals, the use of which is supplied free in the reading room.

The student's close and profitable contact with men and ideas is accomplished in the lecture courses, the societies for mutual advancement, and the other public and private institutions common to large cities. Intelligent and discriminating attendance upon these organizations, as also upon refining and educational operas and theaters, is to be counted as one of the most important auxiliary agencies for advancement. The fear of excessive indulgence in theaters and operas is removed by the fact that the ordinary student has neither the time nor the money for excess.

But one of the most important, perhaps, of the educational advantages of a large city is the daily contact of the student with affairs and objects possessing a strong educative tendency. In a thoroughly equipped printing office he may witness the process by which thought is crystallized into permanent bodily shape.

The large wholesale and retail mercantile establishments are open under proper restriction to the careful and intelligent inspection of the student. He may here view one side, as it were, of the great picture of commerce, which has long been recognized as one of the greatest educating and refining influences of all ages and countries.

In the realm of invention and manufacture, innumerable opportunities for study and enlightenment are offered by a large city. The student of electrical phenomena may visit telephone exchanges, telegraph offices, electric power establishments, electric light works, etc., where he may see in active operation the forces and mechanisms which he is studying in theory. In round houses, iron foundries, machine shops, type foundries, shoe and clothing factories, dye works, woolen factories, many and varied chemical and physical forces are seen at work illustrating the theoretical principles studied in the class.

There is ground for complaint against the unpractical nature of modern education. It does much to unfit the youth for active sympathy and participation with the laboring classes. If there is such a tendency (and denial of it is useless) is it not due

in great measure to the fact that books are made the almost exclusive companions of the student, to the neglect of his companionship with men and things? He is not brought into close enough contact with the great throbbing, pulsating world. Too often his alma mater is his world, his school-mates its inhabitants, his narrow courses its work. With these narrow ideals he emerges from it, unwilling, almost unable, to sympathize with the real world, real fellow-workmen, real labor. Had he been brought into close contact and harmonious touch with the realities of life as exhibited in the living interests and productive industries of a large city, such narrow exclusiveness would be strange indeed, if not impossible.

The two main institutions of Salt Lake City which receive students from the country districts, the University of Utah and the Latter-day Saints' College, have taken advantage of the facilities named above for advancing the supplementary education of their pupils, and their discipline is sufficient to guard the ordinary young person against the allurements which parents so much fear.

The sooner, therefore, the prejudice against education in large cities gives place to a knowledge of its advantages, the better will it be for intended students.

CANAIGRE AND TANNING.

The communication to the News from J. W. Brown, of Texas, regarding the cultivation and use of canaigre as a tanning agent, furnishes some deeply interesting suggestions to home industry workers in Utah. Mr. Brown is a practical tanner, and presents several strong reasons, in addition to the many already urged by the News in past discussions of the subject, in behalf of the extensive cultivation of canaigre root and the institution of factories to utilize it. The sample referred to by Mr. Brown has been received and submitted to leather experts here. These pronounce it a first-class article, in every respect equal to the best produced with other tanning materials.

The specimen received is a piece of sole leather, unrolled. This is the class of leather about which the most doubts have been expressed, in tanning with canaigre. Upper leather made by the use of this agent has been conceded all along to be equal to or even superior to that produced by other agencies. Mr. Brown's sample and the expert judgment upon it ought to set at rest any question as to sole leather. The piece under consideration has become hard and glossy, as he stated it would do.

As to the market for wild canaigre root, that is now principally in foreign countries, the green root bringing about \$8 per ton to the digger, or about \$40 per ton for the dried root in Europe. The United States has not used it to any great extent yet, though the extract works at Deming, New Mexico, has found a good market for its canaigre product. Yet it would take 90,000 tons of the root per annum to fill the place of the gambler imported into the United States. It is estimated that two years more will exhaust, for the foreign trade, the supply of wild