

What The Teachers of Utah Want From The 1909 Legislature

By Dr. George Thomas, President
Of the Utah Teachers' Association

ONE of the necessities in Utah today in school government, outside of cities of the first and second class and consolidated districts, in a larger unit. If larger units could obtain it would be far better in the appointment of teachers and would afford a means of equalizing taxes throughout the section. It is unjust to make trained teachers wholly dependent upon a body of men entirely unfamiliar with the requirements of their calling. The farmer or merchant would not, for a moment, tolerate such interference if the circumstances were reversed. Neither is it just to allow certain favored districts to augment their revenues by taxing large corporations which are, by chance or good fortune, located in their districts and are in fact supported by the entire population in the vicinity.

WORK FOR LEGISLATURE.

The whole people are entitled to the benefit of such income. The law should provide a greater permanency in the policy of school boards. This is particularly true in cities of the second class. A complete change in these cities may take place at any election, and it frequently does. As a consequence the continuity of policy is broken and the experience of the old members is entirely lost. This evil should be remedied at the next session of the legislature. The main part of this reform must come through the people themselves. They must take the schools out of politics and



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then seek men who are qualified for school boards and trustees. Men are wanted who will give the education of the boys and girls their first consideration and then they should be retained.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT.

Into the office of county superintendent should come the most radical change to say the least. It offers no inducement to scholarship and no reward for efficiency. The aspirant for the office must look to the political field, and not to school work, for recognition with a fore-knowledge that an inferior man in every respect may secure the office over an efficient teacher simply because he is a better partisan. If perchance a scholar and an efficient teacher should secure the place, he knows that he will be retired at the end of four years, just at the time when his work is becoming of value to the public and the process of educating a raw man will begin all over again. Would a merchant pursue any such policy with his employees? You cannot find one in the state of Utah. Then why do it in the schools? The law should provide another method of selecting these important public servants. The tenure of office should be made dependent upon scholarship and ability to do the work. This accomplished the superintendents should be given a decisive voice in the selection of teachers for all the schools of the country. Make it possible to secure and retain men of scholarship and

fitness and then give them power to do something besides keep account and visit schools and the schools will show a marked improvement.

AS TO THE TEACHERS.

Last but not the least important is the position of the teacher. To begin with the normal course should be increased, as soon as possible, to five and six years. The eighteen year old teacher is not, as a rule, matured enough to handle school work successfully. It is not alone a completion of courses that is needed for the handling of the intricate problems of school management and mind culture, but a developed mind. For this reason, if no other, the use of public teachers should under all conditions be absolutely forbidden, even as assistants when they have to assume the responsibility of a room.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD.

After the teacher has met the mental requirements he or she should be made to serve a probationary period of two or three years. At the expiration of such time, if the work has been satisfactory, the appointment should be made permanent with the right of the board to remove for cause or inefficiency by a vote of two thirds. This would, as in other countries, afford a degree of stability to the profession. As it stands now the members of the university board of regents are appointed for years but the president and members of the faculty of all ranks for one year only.

Such a method makes the working out of a policy involving any considerable opposition impossible. With the right of removal the state will be protected against lethargy or indifference and the teacher against trivial charges. Through the larger governing unit the necessary adjustment, due to social environment, would be possible.

PENSION SYSTEM.

When the foregoing is adopted provide the teachers with a small pension, to be given after a life of service. The funds for this purpose should come partly from the state or county and partly by assessment upon the individual teachers. The question at once arises, why pension teachers in particular? The answer is that we need a body of men and women absolutely devoted to the cause of the boys and girls of this state. As it stands now they must divide their time between the causes of the boys and girls and money getting. Hence you do not get a soul devoted service. Provide the real teacher means for a modest income in his declining years and then demand his entire service for the children of the commonwealth. The reader may not agree, but something must be done to get more men in the profession. Women in the lower grades are men's superiors as teachers, but in the upper grades the influence of both is needed. For proper development the child and future citizen must have

them. As it is now strong men are leaving the work all the time, and will not remain unless provided, almost in the beginning, with a principality. This drain should be stopped. The evil is upon us and some remedy must be applied.

DEATH IS PAINLESS.

The fear of death, which has been so enormously exploited in dramatic literature, sacred and otherwise, is said to be almost without existence in sickness. Most patients have lost it completely by the time they become seriously ill.

Death and sleep are both painless, according to Dr. Woods Hutchinson in the American Magazine, and cause neither fear nor anxiety by their approach. It is one of the most merciful things in nature that the overwhelming majority of the poisons which destroy life, whether they are those of infectious diseases or those which are elaborated from the body's own waste products, act as narcotics and abolish consciousness long before the end comes.

While death is not in any sense analogous to sleep, it resembles it to the extent that it is in the vast majority of instances not only not painful, but welcome. Pain-racked and fever-scorched patients long for death as the wearied traveler longs for sleep.

While many of the processes which lead to death are painful, death itself is painless, natural, like the fading of a flower or the falling of a leaf. Our dear ones drift out on the ebbing tide of life without fear, without pain, without regret, save for those they leave behind. When death comes, close enough so that we can see the eyes behind the mask his face becomes as welcome as that of his "twin brother," sleep.

Utah, the State of Modern Educational Advantages

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have enviable records for scholarship in all of these institutions.

PHYSICAL TRAINING.

The mens sana in corpore sano idea is accepted here, and as a result every pupil in the school is required to take some form of exercise unless exempted therefrom by physician's certificate on account of disability. The gymnasium with its fine equipment of apparatus, race track, lockers, and booths, making systematic physical training possible. The work for boys and girls is done under the direction of skilled instructors.

Military training for boys has always been a strong feature of the school. In this respect competent judges have said that the cadet work of the S. L. H. S. was unequalled by that of any other public high school in the country. The organization is composed of four full companies, a bugle corps of 12 pieces, and a band of 40 pieces. The drilling, discipline, and esprit de corps of the battalion on the occasion of the California trip, when they officiated as the escort of Admiral Evans, excited the unbounded admiration of the officers of the United States army and navy.

ATHLETICS FOSTERED.

The athletic interests of the school

have always been fostered and encouraged by the faculty and the board of education as well, for they are convinced that athletics, under proper supervision, will mean much for the development of the body as well as promoting genuine school spirit. This policy was demonstrated in a very unmistakable manner by the building and equipping of the gymnasium already mentioned. The High School Athletic association, an organization of some 400 members, looks after all matters of inter-class and inter-scholastic contests in football, baseball, track and basketball. Proceeds from all games are turned into the treasury of the association; accounts are strictly kept and audited and published for the benefit of members at their regular meetings. The H. S. A. G. organization, numbering about 600 in its membership, performs a like service for the girls, as well as promoting other activities in the school; for example, the Girl's Orchestra, and the Girl's Choral club. The officers of these associations are elected annually and represent each class in the school.

THIRTEEN HUNDRED PUPILS.

The large campus and playgrounds, the beautiful lawns and trees at the High school, have much to do with the feeling of loyalty and even affection in which the school is held by its mem-

bers. No school site in the city has equal advantages in this respect. The popularity of the school in all its departments is attested by the steady and uniform increase in number enrolled in each. In the year ending June, 1908, less than 600 pupils had enrolled. Last year the total number was approximately 1300. The present year will record an increase of at least 100, since a large midyear class is expected in February.

While all conditions in respect to the buildings and accommodations are not ideal, yet the very many material advantages offered by the school overbalance the inconveniences, which this year are greatly minimized. The street car system has been so improved that pupils who are obliged to come from all parts of the city are very rarely tardy.

A single daily session is in vogue. The school session begins at 9 a. m. and ends at 2:30 p. m., except for those who have drill or laboratory periods after this time. An intermission of half an hour for luncheon is given between 12:20 and 12:50. The school is equipped with a very good restaurant, where all the food served is wholesome and home cooked and furnished at a minimum of expense.

The policy of the school has always been to encourage all that is healthy and uplifting in social life, and the class functions in the way of dances and parties held in the gymnasium from time to time are very pleasurable and inspiring occasions.

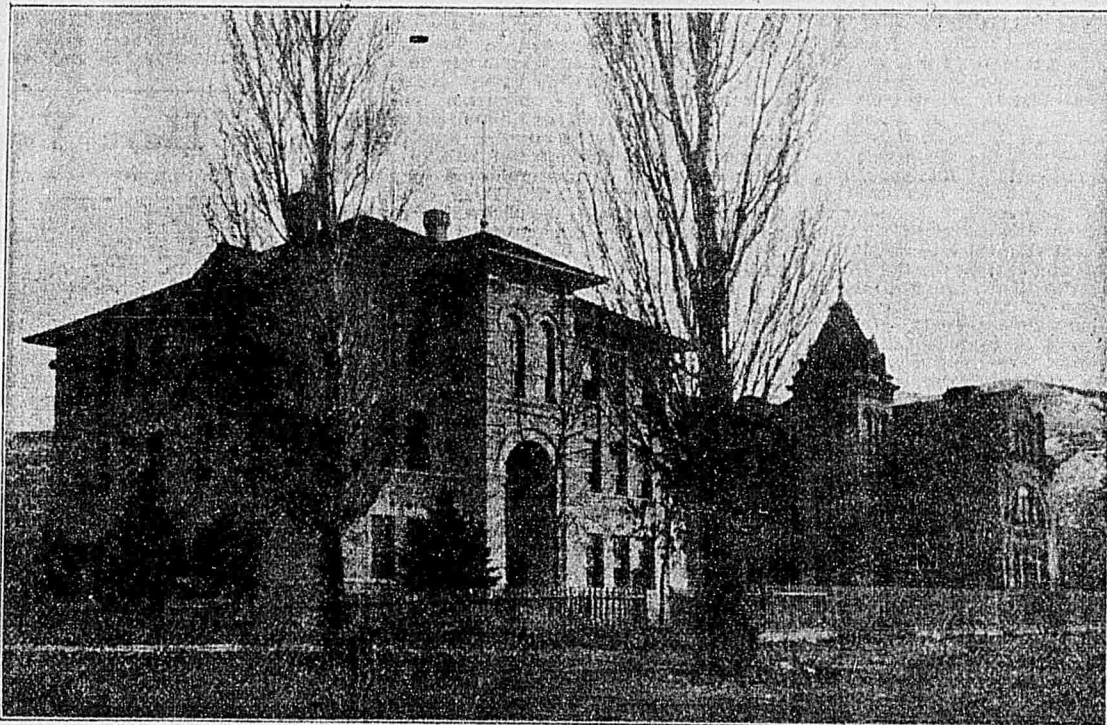
MOVE FOR NEW QUARTERS.

At the present time a movement is on foot to build a new high school which will be nearer the center of pop-

ulation, more convenient in its arrangements, and in appearance more in keeping with the dignity of Salt Lake City. It is to be hoped that this movement will be successful. Practically every city of the size and wealth of Salt Lake has made ample provision for high school instruction in the way of up-to-date buildings and equipment. If one were to visit Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver or any of our neighboring cities, the high school would be pointed out to him as one of the buildings in which the citizens took a just pride; but this is not the case in Salt Lake. If the parents and patrons would be convinced of the true situation by visiting the school, there would be no doubt as to their sentiments toward it. Moreover, they could not but be convinced of the splendid scholastic work accomplished, the strong moral uplift given to the pupils, and the fact that the high school is, after all, the people's college, and is nearer to their lives and their interests than any other public institution.

CANDLE SHADES EASILY MADE.

Lovely candle shades are easily made from folded paper; dainty wall paper is pretty for these, or water color paper decorated by hand with small flowers. To make the shade, fold an eighth-inch square of paper corner to corner four times. Cut off one inch of the pointed end and open the paper. Now go over the creases, folding them at the corners outward, making each alternate crease outward. Thus shaped the little shade is ready to slip over the shade holder.—Delineator.



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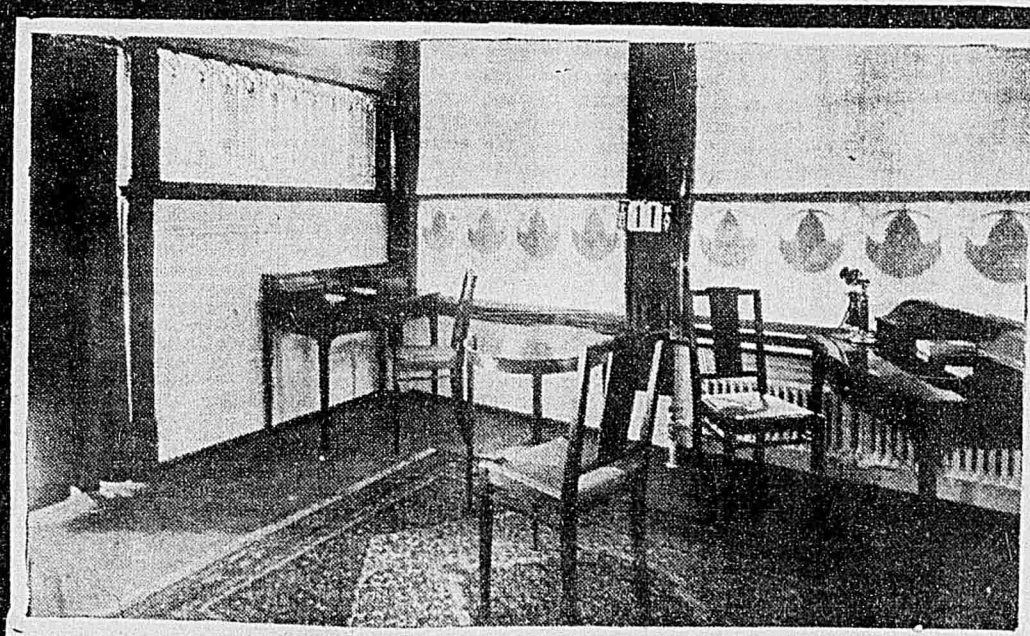
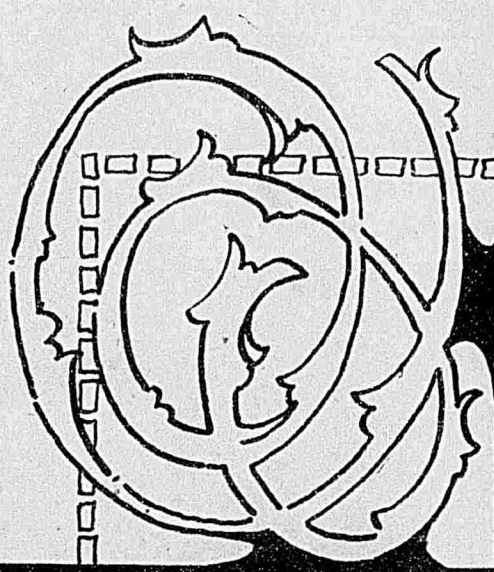
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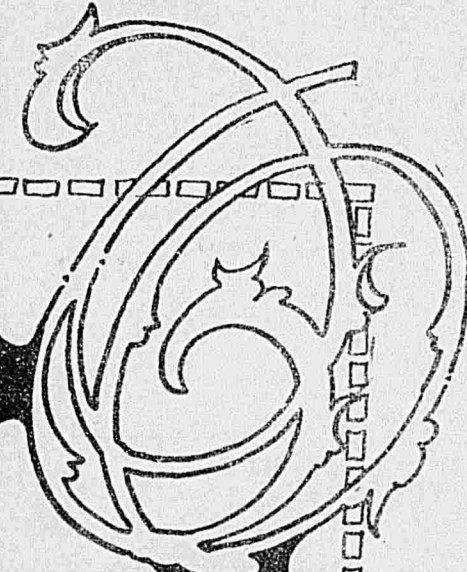
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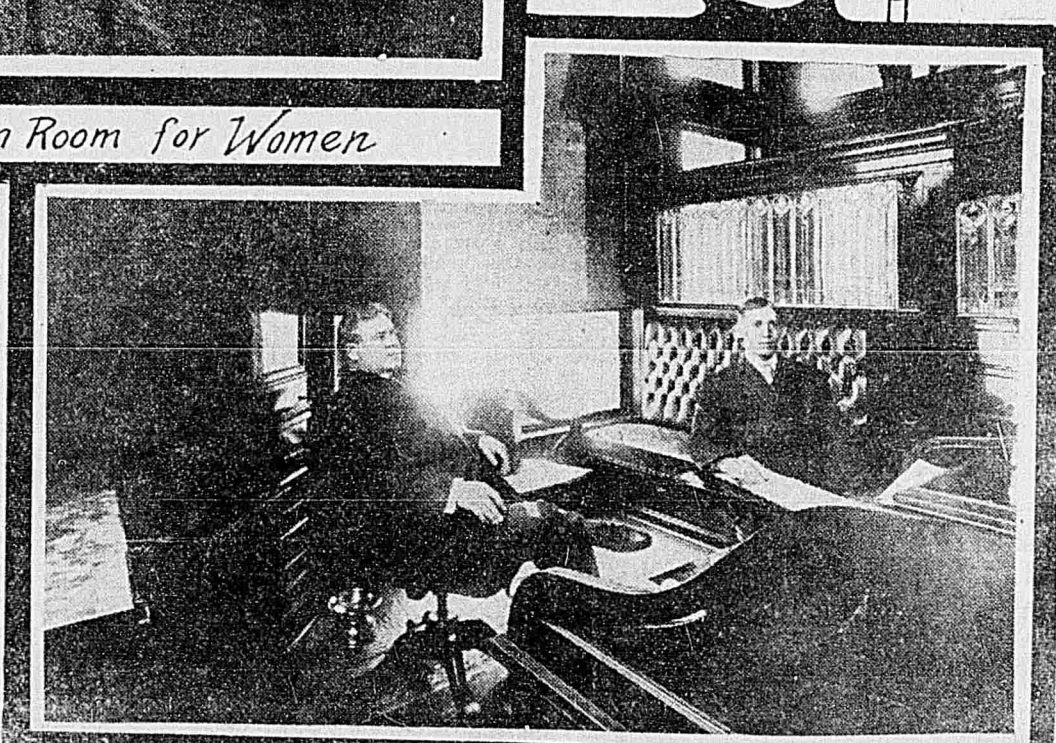
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