

VOTING RIGHTS OF TAXPAYERS.

THE first election for school bonds in this city was set aside, the Supreme Court of the Territory having decided that it was called illegally. The Utah commission undertook to control the election. The DESERET NEWS took strong grounds against this usurpation, contending that the election should be conducted under the Territorial statute which created the Board of Education, and that it was not such an election as was contemplated in the act of Congress which created the Utah Commission.

The Supreme Court decided that the election should be conducted by the Board of Education, and that the Utah Commission had no jurisdiction over the matter. It summarized its opinion in these words:

"The court holds that the election to decide upon the issuance and sale of the bonds in question should be called and conducted according to the provisions of sections 122, 123, 124 and 125 above referred to. And we further hold that the qualifications of voters must be determined by the laws of the United States when any conflict arises between them and the laws enacted by the Territorial Legislature."

Section 122, referred to by the court, contains this provision:

"The Board of Education of any city may, when in their judgment it is advisable, or when petitioned by a majority of the resident male taxpayers of the said district, as appears from the county assessment roll of the last preceding year, shall call a meeting and submit to a vote of the district whether bonds of such district shall be issued."

The other part of the section, and the two sections following, give particulars as to the calling and conduct of the election for school bonds, and contain nothing further about the qualifications of voters. If the election is conducted under the provisions of these sections, as the court holds it should be, then the "*resident male taxpayers*" have a right to vote on the issuance of the school bonds.

But the call for the meeting at which the bonds are to be voted on, issued by the Board of Education, says:

"The new registry lists as prepared by the registration officer of the county, shall govern as to the qualifications of voters."

The question is, should the resident male taxpayers, whose property rights are affected by this election, vote upon the issuance of the bonds, or is the voting legally restricted to the registered voters on the new lists—whatever that may mean? If the territorial statute is to govern, as the court says it is, then the Board of Education has erred in limiting the voting to the registered voters.

The board has probably construed the language of the court in reference

to the laws of Congress to mean that the voting must be so limited. But the court has not said there is any conflict between the territorial law and the congressional law. If there is a conflict, of course, the law of Congress prevails. No one will dispute that. The root of the matter is in the nature of the election for school bonds. Is it an election in the sense of the terms as used in the congressional law? We believe not. It is not in any way a political matter. It is purely financial. It does not relate to or affect the government, local or national. It bears only upon the property interests of the people. It is in the nature of a meeting of taxpayers. It is so called in the law. No person is to be elected. The term "election" is used as it would be for the determination of financial questions in a private corporation. In reality it is not an election as the word is used and evidently intended in the acts of Congress.

As to the injustice of limiting the voting to those whose names are on the registry lists there can be no dispute. But the Board cannot take this into consideration, though the court might, in construing the meaning of the statute.

Perhaps the Board of Education has taken the safer course, in view of the doubt left on this question in the decision of the court. But the rights of the taxpayers who are not registered voters, ought to be determined. This need not interfere with the election. The funds required are needed for a laudable purpose and the registered voters can go to the place appointed and cast their ballots. We hope and believe the majority will vote, "Bonds, Yes."

But some unregistered taxpayers ought to offer their votes, and if refused, carry their case, which is the case of a large number of property holders, into the courts, that this important question may be finally decided.

A SPECIMEN OF "LIBERALISM."

WE ARE informed that the trustees of several school districts in this city have refused access to the school houses for the holding of political meetings. In consequence of this, meeting houses have been applied for and used for this purpose. Now there has been a great deal of fault found with the "Mormons" for mingling religion with politics. They have been accused of uniting Church and State, because they have held both religious and political meetings in the same building. The necessity which once

existed for this seeming amalgamation has almost entirely disappeared, and it is not desirable that our meeting houses, erected specially for religious worship, shall be used for political gatherings.

We do not mean to say that there is anything in the notion, that holding a political assembly in a church edifice is in any sense uniting Church and State. But as this was made necessary in times when only one public building could be had in each ward or settlement, and the conditions are greatly changed, the old custom need not and ought not to be continued.

But why is it that schoolhouses, which are much more appropriate for the purpose, cannot be had for political meetings of the people who reside in the districts and own the buildings? Is this "Liberalism?" If so, it affords one more argument why it should be destroyed, and why American citizens who desire fairness and freedom should come out from its ranks and show their disgust for its methods.

Some years ago when a few howling malcontents desired the use of a school house, in which to abuse and malign the majority of the people, and were refused, they made a terrible outcry about the rights of American citizens and taxpayers, and demanded admission as a matter of right. Now that men of their kind have obtained office, they are less regardful of those alleged rights than the persons against whom they so loudly declaimed.

If it is "Liberal" policy to close the schoolhouses against Democrats and Republicans who desire to hold meetings therein, because such meetings are not in the interest of the remnant left of the "Liberal" party, that ought to be known and clearly understood. Obstruction, intimidation, unfairness, trickery and disfranchisement of all who oppose it, are now all that is left of the policy of so-called "Liberalism." It is a fight against Democracy. It is a war against Republicanism. It is a struggle to perpetuate old hates and to galvanize into force dead issues. What decent American citizen can work for its illiberal and fanatical ends?

THE LEHI SUGAR WORKS.

It is expected that the sugar works at Lehi will give a practical demonstration of their ability and capacity early in September next. This can scarcely be other than satisfactory, and thereafter the great drain upon our resources, for that one staple at least, will be greatly curtailed and finally, we trust, extinguished alto-