DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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Deseret News Publishing Co.

THE SPRINKLING TAX.

The announcement made in the News last evening that the Territorial supreme court had decided the sprinkling tax ordinance of Salt Lake City to be invalid was received with satisfaction by the people generally, who have felt that the manner in which the tax was levied was a grievous injustice to most of the property owners affected. The ordinance provided for a special tax of seven cents per foot frontage on all streets sprinkled. When the levy was made in 1891 it was protested against by a number of taxpayers. As in all instances of this kind, where resistance is to be made to an unjust enactment, it is necessary for some one to take the initiatory step. The contest against the special sprinkling tax was headed by O. H. Pettit, Esq., who held the position of city councilor for a term previous to the time of the passage of the ordinance, and who in that capacity had given attention to the street sprinkling subject. He took up the fight in earnest, and notwithstanding that the case went against his side in the district court, he persisted in carrying on the struggle, and through the able presentation by his attorneys of the cause in the higher court has secured a great triumph on behalf of the people.

In the court Mr. Pettit and his confreres set out that the city had levied a tax upon their property to pay for sprinkling, and threatened to enforce the collection by selling the property if the tax was not paid at once. They insisted that such sale would be an irreparable injury to them, as the tax sought to be enforced was inequitable and illegal, and they asked relief from the court. The complaint was demurred to in the district court, the demurrer sustained and an appeal taken. On the appeal the supreme court, in [illegible] unanimous opinion, held that while the statute gave the city power to levy taxes by local assessment for sewerage, paving and other like purposes, including street improvements and repairs, authority to levy such tax for street sprinkling had not been granted in express terms; and further, that as street sprinkling was not a permanent improvement, the clause empowering the corporation to levy a tax for improvements did not apply to sprinkling, therefore the ordinance passed by the City Council was without authority of law, and void.

As the matter now stands, those who paid the tax under protest must be reimbursed by the city; a few who permitted their property to be sold rather than pay the tax also must have their property title cleared by the municipality. As for those who paid the tax without protesting, should they enter suit for its recovery because of wrongful collection, the value of their claim must be determined by the courts. In any event the city must refund a considerable sum which it has collected.

For the unpleasant predicament in which the municipality finds itself in regard to the sprinkling business, the blame belongs to the city councilmen who, elected in February, 1890, passed the ordinance, and their advisers to the [illegible]. It was urged as a "progressive" measure by its advocates, but in fact the ordinance was outrageously unjust in its design, and a Council which possessed due regard for the rights of the taxpayer never would have enacted it. Its unfairness has been patent from the first, and it is not to be wondered at that the people feel relieved by its being swept away. If the ordinance had not been so grossly oppressive in its distribution of burdens as compared with the benefits received, it is improbable that there would have been any contention against it. The city was empowered to "levy and collect local taxes, in proportion to benefits," in districts created, and the sprinkling tax levy was out of all proportion to benefits for the greater part of those who had to pay the tax, hence the fight against it.

The street sprinkling, however, is a necessity. Not that [illegible] would be the [illegible] that some would have it appear, but still it is a necessity to the comfort and health of the inhabitants, as well as to the good condition of the streets in those sections of town where there is considerable amount of traffic. The question of how to carry it on presents itself, therefore, before the city administration, and no doubt the present City Council will find a way out of the dilemma, notwithstanding the handicapped position in which it finds itself by reason of the policy of its predecessors. It is suggested that the expense must be met out of the general tax. But this will be a manifest injustice to some, unless the whole city can be sprinkled—a contract that is too large to undertake at present; so if a plan can be formulated by which the sections that receive immediate benefit shall pay the expense it will be much the better way. The Council is authorized to divide the city into districts for sewerage and other like purposes, to provide a system of "doing any or all work in and upon streets," and to determine the form and mode of local assessments to pay therefor. It also has the authority to collect local assessments to repair streets and "supply the city or the inhabitants thereof with water." These powers are sufficient for the purpose. If the inhabitants of a district want water supplied by means of sprinkling during part of the year, or desire to avail themselves of the repairing of otherwise dusty and cut up streets that [illegible] through that method, it is their business, and the expense can be legally met by local assessment. Districts could be created for this purpose, a special tax levied on a fair basis, and nobody would want to quarrel in the courts. Thus the whole matter would be amicably and permanently settled, because it would rest upon the just demands of the districts and by an equitable requirement upon the taxpayers.

THE ASIATIC WAR.

The interest in the conflict which seems to be in progress between China and Japan, whether or not there has been a formal declaration of war, is not so much as to how those two nations will fare in the struggle, as it is to whether or not the European powers will be drawn into "the great war" which has been predicted so often, and which was looked for to commence on the banks of the Danube. If Russia is backing Japan in the present movement, as circumstances indicate with a reasonable degree of certainty, then a general conflagration is probable, with the great powers of Europe instead of the two oriental nations as the chief factors.

It is suggested in the latest dispatches that China, being unable to cope with Japan at sea, will rely upon crowding large forces into the Corean peninsula by land, and thus by force of numbers drive her more agile enemy from the field. This plan of campaign would seem to offer a solution to the difficulty so far as the two nations are concerned, and make Chinese victory certain. But the fact that Li Hung Chang, the able and astute Chinese viceroy, is trying to get his forces into Corea by sea indicates that there is something unsatisfactory about the land project. That is exactly where the trouble lies, so far as its disadvantage relates to China. Not only has there been a rebellion in Corea, but China has had to cope with insurrection which is far from being suppressed. In fact there has been a cessation of hostilities only because the viceroy has not sent in sufficient force to overawe the rebels. These have complete control of the province of Manchuria, in northeastern China. Manchuria severs the whole land connection between China and Corea, and since the former's army has not been able to put down the rebellion up to the present, it is not likely to get through the rebel province for active operations in Corea. Again, Manchuria borders upon Russia as well as Corea on its northeastern side, and the rebellion there is said to be instigated by Russian influence. Therefore if China has to combat the czar's active work with both Japan and Manchuria, the chances for the Japanese being overrun by her enemy through northern Corea are exceedingly limited, and the transportation of forces by sea is the only hope of success for China. Since this cannot be accomplished without British or German aid, and a leased British steamer already has been sunk in the effort, there is a lively prospect for interference in that direction.

Japan is often referred to in the dispatches as the aggressive party. There are, however, two sides to that question. Japan recognizes Corea as an independent kingdom, as do also the United States and other powers. China claims suzerainty over Corea and exacts an annual tribute of 100 pieces of red silk, 200 pieces of [illegible], and other tribute articles; she requires the Coreans to use the Chinese calendar, and that the king [illegible] China. [illegible] When the rebellion in Corea began, China sent troops to [illegible], as did also Japan, and has some [illegible] people [illegible] in the peninsula. The sending of Japanese troops, and the [illegible] Japan's policy for two centuries, of Corea as an independent power, [illegible] has caused the trouble—each party considering that the other has exceeded its legitimate sphere.

That the war would be called with satisfaction in some quarters of Europe, notwithstanding its terrible results, is a fact, regrettable though it be from a humanitarian point of view. It is not long since a member of a leading English business house publicly expressed the hope that a European war would break out. "Yes," said he, "there are too many men, and if there was a big war it would make business better and make it easier for the rest of us to live." The sentiment may be regarded as cold-blooded and brutal; but it illustrates a feeling that permeates European powers to a large extent, and if they fancy they see an opportunity for financial gain in war, then the fight will go on. The whole game is one in which a desire for aggrandizement is the ruling motive—and which renders imminent a most disastrous conflict.

NO, SIR, THERE IS NOT!

Editor Deseret News:

Will you kindly inform your readers if there is any redress for aggrieved taxpayers whose property is assessed at a valuation more than twice what it is worth, and when they would gladly sell it for half of [illegible]? This has occurred in Salt Lake county this year, and it appears that there should be [illegible] for taxpayers when the board of equalization seems disposed to be arbitrary. SUBSCRIBER.

Unfortunately there is but one—and that an unfavorable answer, to the above question. Assessors are supposed to place a fair and equitable value upon the property to be taxed, and it is very rare indeed that their valuation exceeds the actual value of the property—the chief complaints against them, where complaints are made at all, being that they have assessed somebody else a little lower, or treated others with more generous favor than they have the complainant. In order to listen to and rectify errors of this kind, and to make the tax levy general and just upon all parts of the city, county or state, as the case may be, boards of equalization are provided, who bring to their unpleasant task much patience and usually good judgment. If they, however, fail to correct the assessment, even though, as in instances such as our correspondent alludes to, the valuation may be outrageously excessive, there is no redress—the owner must pay the tax. While recognizing in "Subscriber" a well-informed and accurate man, and one not given to extravagance of statement, we cannot but think there are extremely few cases in Salt Lake county where the owner of property would gladly sell it "for half or even less than half of its assessed value," that such cases as there are would seem to be beyond redress if the board of equalization refuses to give it. The tax must be paid, or the property sold for what it will bring. The injustice of all this may be admitted and be as plain as day; but the procedure is one that we presume would probably come under those errors of law which claim existence if not reputation by reason of their universality.

A SUBTERRANEOUS DANGER.

The strange occurrence at Coffeyville, Kansas, on the morning of July 24, opens up a new source of apprehension to dwellers on the Plains. They have become accustomed in a degree to cyclones, drouths, and fierce rain and hail storms in that section of country, and settlers there realize that they take chances on such occurrences. With the building up of the country they have hoped, however, to secure a measure of immunity from these things by changing the conditions which exist. But the advance of civilization and modern development which is effecting this change also has discovered a danger which heretofore had not been thought of in that locality. Anything in the shape of convulsions of the earth such as are caused by volcanoes was unknown in that mountainless region; but now eruptive forces almost as violent and dangerous as those which occasion volcanic disturbances are found to exist in a moist and level country where there is not a mountain peak within the range of natural vision.

It may be that the explosion of a natural gas well with such vehemence and extent as that described in the dispatch is attributable to local causes. At any rate it shows that eruptive forces in the earth are not confined to mountainous regions, and indicates that in the disturbances of the earth's surface that are going on, the limit of natural phenomena has not been reached. Blowing up a considerable section of land by a natural gas explosion is a new thing, but considering the possibilities in this direction, from the extent of natural gas fields known to exist, there is a vast field [illegible] catastrophe by nature's hand [illegible] any emergency which may produce [illegible] in that direction.

The NEWS acknowledges the receipt of a neatly and handsomely [illegible] pamphlet of eighty pages, entitled "New York—the American Cosmopolis—the Foremost City of the World," edited and published by Moses King. Within its pages are pictures of some of the newest and finest as well as the most notable structures of the new world's metropolis, and the description that accompanies them is as [illegible] and interesting as a romance. It is to Mr. George H. Daniels, general passenger agent of the New York Central railway—a gentleman who was recently in this city and has many friends here—that we are indebted for the copy received.

ROUNDABOUT, BUT MAY BE TRUE!

It is a recognized [illegible] for the possessor of any marketable commodity to desire, and try to get, all that such commodity will bring, whether it be simple or special labor, or the product thereof; and there are times when from one cause or another demand is [illegible]. We have seen times when commerce was more remunerative than [illegible], though the farmer is most generally [illegible]; and it is everywhere [illegible] that abundant or excessive supply brings down the prices of that supply. So, wheat is low in either the prospect or realization of a good harvest. Wool is generally lowest after shearing—when everybody wants to sell. Butter goes down in price with [illegible] grass; and potatoes can be of late been sold for a song when harvesting was on and every producer wanted a market. When markets are thus depressed, the seller, feeling that terms offered are unremunerative, is apt to look farther for that relief which he feels is his honest due, and he is particularly allured if a better offer comes, or if he feel that prospects are brighter outside the local demand.

While the Utah market is straitened it is quite possible to think that shipping is more likely to be of benefit than otherwise; and while the individual producer may not feel that his little will [illegible] in an outside market, and may be indisposed to take any risk as a consequence, dealers or storekeepers who exchange goods for produce are more likely to want an opening for their larger accumulation, whatever that may be. As a consequence, this class, here at least, are more often tempted, and are more liable to [illegible] than is the actual producer. It is a little different farther east, for there every farmer is liable to send on his own account, a few cases of eggs, a few pounds of butter, his surplus vegetables, potatoes, fruit fresh or dried, poultry or other products, to some broker, commission house or [illegible] buyer. While farmers as a class may be shrewd enough in a personal deal, the highly colored and skillfully worded circular gathers quite a percentage of them all the time. Utah shippers have had considerable experience in this line, but the victims, as a rule, have cared little for an exposure which reflected in part upon themselves, and then redress was almost impossible because of the distance and difficulty in the way if it became a matter of law. But many a carload of potatoes, many a lot of dried fruit, not a little wool, has gone from here, for which nothing was ever received. Freights, storage, commission and charges have eaten up both shipment and prospective profits. Home shippers were slow to believe that trickery was so perfect, that firms were bogus, that circulars were written to deceive, and that sections of Chicago, like South Water street, were largely "a den of thieves;" and while there are in that locality reliable and responsible firms, it is urged upon them by the *Grocers' Criterion* of that city that "they ought to take strong measures at once, to expose the dishonest and disreputable swindlers, who are making the name of that street a byword and reproach in all parts of the West."

It is evident from the number of letters published, that the fraudulent business is remunerative, and it is equally evident that victims are more disposed to bear the first loss, than to [illegible] litigation, particularly where "there is irresponsibility, and a judgment if obtained would be uncollectable" at best. Some of those so-called firms, too, evade the law "by buying shipments outright, guaranteeing the customer a certain price;" they thus "avoid responsibility as agents or commission men, and can only be proceeded against as upon an ordinary account." The *Criterion* claims that its readers would have saved much money, and "have avoided the vexation and humiliation of being buncoed by bogus commission men" if their advice had been taken.

It has been remarked that potatoes were never as low in this city at this season of the year. There seems to be a plethora at present. Of course the supply is mainly of a class which probably would not answer for shipment, but the price has a discouraging influence on the farmer who may have devoted [illegible] to quite a crop. For the benefit of such we quote from the same paper of late date:

An exchange says if the price of potatoes [illegible] advancing [illegible] per barrel [illegible] ordinary article of food [illegible] as a luxury and taken [illegible] and champagne at the end of [illegible] fashionable dinners.

This is merely only temporary, but [illegible] will be some weeks yet, and in the interval there will be change. In the absence of any organized [illegible] or shipping to [illegible] dealers will as a rule be [illegible] in buying. It may not be amiss to state here, however, that the general co-operative and other [illegible] in this Territory have increased [illegible] of Z. C. M. I. which is not only familiar with the most reliable buyers of Utah produce, but with prevailing prices, and somewhat with prospects; and while any public presentation of [illegible] would be out of place, the desired information will always be had by its patrons on application. Further comment would be injudicious, save to impress upon dealers and shippers that they be wary of [illegible] particularly if they offer prices beyond usual quotations; that alone should suggest inquiry, for after all, in the great trade centers, there is surprising uniformity in values and few firms have special opportunities over each other in open market. It is confidently predicted that a fair price can be counted upon for all surplus that Utah may have, and should this prove correct, the prevailing spirit of economy and thrift will no doubt exhibit this year a clearance of much old indebtedness which has been felt to be a burthen for at least the times of undue depression.

That the Utah farmer may be victimized without dealing in Chicago of course "goes without saying." There is too great a difference between buying and selling of produce in many directions, too much of the cream reaches the dealer, too little inures to the producer, and instances are fresh in the memory where commission houses in Salt Lake City have not done "the square thing" with a consignment. But it did not need a trip of two thousand miles nearly to get reclamation or at all events an explanation, good or otherwise. After awhile joint selling will bring expenses to a minimum and as a consequence the producer will find increased remuneration. Grain will yet go into elevators in central localities and receipts will pass current as the precious metals. Some combination of counties will have their agent who will see to the disposition of stock, grain, wool, fruit, etc., and factory products at home or abroad. Buying may yet be modified and foreign products may be distributed in such equity that none will contend or deem that middlemen and speculation have enhanced in value the indispensables of any clime or condition. Meanwhile there may be a curtailment of desire, a defined limit to the use of fancied goods, or like the patriots, the people here may decline to pay tribute to any outer power by producing in simplicity yet in abundance all that is desirable for "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Much of life and many of its habits are artificial; "words of wisdom" are no misnomer, and for Utah citizens to make "the beauty of their garments exemplify the workmanship of their own hands" may be proven as the highest manifestation of social and industrial economy, and as essentially part of the divine order as is "baptism for the remission of sins!"

Nothing is so delicious as a good cup of tea. If you drink the Pride of Japan, (Tree Tea) you will be convinced that it is the best. Take no substitute. 1

Val Blatz Milwaukee Beer, delikatessen and the very best of imported cold eatables at Val Blatz headquarters, W. H. Hofheimer, Manager.

Given Away!

To our customers, high grade Chainless Bicycle; every purchase counts. Buy your drugs at our store and secure a chance.

JOHNSON, PRATT DRUG CO., 11 Main Street.

MILLENNIAL STAR AND JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES from 1850 to date; TIMES AND SEASONS, Vol. 6, 1845. FOR SALE AT DESERET NEWS OFFICE.

Val Blatz Headquarters, 222 South Main, throws its doors open tomorrow, Saturday. W. H. Hofheimer, manager.

Dr. Price's Cream Baking Powder
Contains no Ammonia or Alum.

W. H. Hofheimer, Agent for Val Blatz's Milwaukee Beer, will office at the new headquarters, 222 S. Main St.

LAST OF THE SHOSHONES.

The Indians will Fold their Tepees and silently steal away.

No such weird and picturesque dances as the Shoshones, who will be seen at Calder's for the last time (tomorrow) have ever been seen on the stage in any theater and probably will never be seen again in this city. It was after repeated negotiations and failures that they were secured. The government agent stated that never before had he so much difficulty in securing them and that it was not likely that they would again leave the reservation.

Tomorrow's exercises will be of greater interest than any of the preceding programs. In addition to the war dance at 3 and 8:30 p.m., there will be a foot race by the Indians against bicycles, arrow practice, etc.

Held's Military Band will give two concerts at 3:30 and 7 p.m. Admission 15 cents.

Val Blatz Milwaukee Beer, delikatessen and the very best of imported cold eatables at Val Blatz headquarters. W. H. Hofheimer, Manager.

When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria.
When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria.
When she became Miss, she clung to Castoria.
When she had Children, she gave them Castoria.

SALT LAKE THEATER
CHAS. S. BURTON, Manager.
[illegible]
THREE NIGHTS, BEGINNING
MONDAY, JULY 30th.
Annual Tour of
Chas. Frohman's Stock Co.,
From the
EMPIRE THEATER, NEW YORK.
Presenting Sydney Grundy's
SOWING THE WIND
In the same manner as seen 300 Nights in New York, 100 Nights in Chicago.
THE COMPANY.
Henry Miller, William Faversham, [illegible], W. H. Thompson, [illegible] — Viola Allen, Isabelle Irving, [illegible]
"Sowing the Wind" will be given with all the original Empire Theatre scenery, furniture, etc.
Sale of Seats begins Friday, July 27th. Prices—[illegible]
NEXT ATTRACTION
POTTER AND BELLEW.
August 17-18.

Lyceum Theater,
T. F. O'MALLEY, Manager.
Thursday, July 26th, Chas. A. Gardner, "Karl" the sweet singer, and his great company of [illegible] people in
"THE PRIZE WINNER."

C. W. PECK,
Fine Tailoring,
54 WEST, SECOND SOUTH STREET.

WELLS,
THE ARTIST TAILOR, Cutter and Fitter.
The Largest and Finest Stock of
Home Made and Imported Goods.
To Reduce our Large Stock of Summer Goods, we will make Suits to order for the next 30 days at actual cost.
See our Prices.
Cleaning and Repairing.

SIGNS of the TIMES
NO SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT IN SIGHT. HOW SHALL WE MEET THE SITUATION?

When Senator Teller said a few days ago that he could not now foresee the result of which these present conditions were leading us, and perhaps it is better for his peace of mind that he could not, it set many people to thinking very seriously.

But fortunately the American people are not given to yielding to difficulties, but to overcoming them. We anticipated a great depression in trade and began some months ago making preparations to meet it by preparing ourselves to make prices lower than ever before and for doing business with less profit than ever before, realizing in times like these that low prices would be the greatest attraction a merchant could offer. We have not laid off any of our old help, but have employed a large number of new, putting agents and travelers in new fields, and largely increasing our manufacturing department, and are rewarded by receiving a large increase in the number of orders. In fact, our agents and traveling salesmen are doing a very satisfactory business.

We are now making a very clean, neat business suit for $14.25 and our $16.50, $18.25 and $20 suits this year are ones that [illegible] cost the customer $25 and $30, while our prices for the very finest worsteds are proportionately low.

PLYMOUTH ROCK PANTS CO.
172 South State Street.
SALT LAKE CITY, - UTAH.

LOST.
Between Kaysville and Salt Lake City, a sack of clothing. Return to Nathan T. Porter, Centerville, and be rewarded.

AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY TRAVELERS CHEQUES
Are safer than Cash. Refunded if lost.
Paid anywhere in the world without personal identification.
Principal office of company, 65 BROADWAY, N. Y.

OUR BIG SHOE SALE IS NOW ON.
See Our Footwear! Get Our Prices, and then
BUY!
DUNFORD'S. THE LOW PRICE SHOE STORE.

NOTHING SO HANDY
FOR PIC-NICS, EXCURSIONS, TRAVEL OR DOMESTIC USE,
AS CANNED OR PORTABLE GOODS.
Z. C. M. I.
CARRIES
AN IMMENSE VARIETY—CANNED, COOKED, READY FOR USE.

MEATS OF ALL KINDS, FOWLS, FISH, VEGETABLES, FRUITS.

OYSTERS, LOBSTERS, CLAMS, RELISHES, OLIVES.

PRESERVED FRUITS, JAMS, JELLIES, PICKLES AND OLIVES IN BULK.

Summer Drinks:
Lime Juice,
Fruit Syrups,
Lemon Sugar

Crackers, fancy and plain.
Creamery Butter, Cheese, Eggs.
Condensed Milk and Cream.
Choice Hams, Dried Meats, and innumerable useful supplies.

T. G. WEBBER, Superintendent.