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SALT LAKE CITY, - MAY 1, 1908.

COUNTY FINANCES.

The financial status of the County is reflected in the fact that the authorities are in a position to reduce the bonded indebtedness and thus lighten the burdens of taxation. If the City administration had had the welfare of the City at heart, instead of personal interests, there would have been no need at this time to urge another loan.

There is, of course, no truth in the assertions of the falsely so-called American party organ, that the County Commissioners are contemplating a raise in the valuation of City property for the purpose of discriminating against citizens of the American party. That is one of the innumerable falsehoods the party organ does not believe itself, but which it tries to make its readers believe, for political purposes. The valuation, as fixed by the Assessor, seems to be founded upon actual increases in values, owing to the development of the City. There is no valid reason for charging political motives, even if it must be admitted that a decrease all round in valuation for tax purposes would have been more in harmony with the times.

It is stated that some of the County Commissioners favor a still further increase in the valuation, of the business property because they consider it disproportionately low as compared to residence property. If the Commissioners act upon that suggestion, they will, we fear, commit a mistake. It is undoubtedly true that the rate on business property is not proportionate to that of residence property, but the remedy for that is to lower the rate on homes which do not give the owners any revenue, directly.

There are many reasons for lowering the valuation on residences. When the County is in a position to pay off its indebtedness it should be able to get along with less revenue. The times are not quite as prosperous as they were a year ago. It is harder for the home owner to save the necessary taxes, if he has only wages to rely on. Many property owners in the City are taxed to death, and would be glad to sell out, if they could. Managers of collection agencies could tell the Commissioners that many are in actual danger of losing their homes just now. The Board of Equalization should take the situation under consideration and try to relieve the burdens rather than increasing them.

HASTY FINANCIAL LEGISLATION.

According to dispatches from Washington, still another currency bill has been introduced, and the expectation is that it will pass. We really hope that this expectation will be disappointed.

Not that we have formed any objections to the proposed financial law, for of its provisions we know very little; but because it is hastily introduced, at a late day, and is expected to be rushed through Congress in order to satisfy a public demand that something be done to reform the national currency.

An exchange remarks that "when party leaders frantically urge Congress to 'do something,' in an intricate matter like currency legislation, there is always danger ahead. That is now the burden of the news from Washington. Leading men are convinced that 'something' must be done. They do not know and cannot agree what that something should be, but they assert that the country was promised that a law of some kind would be passed.

We have heretofore expressed the opinion that next to taxation, the currency is the most intricate problem with which the law-making power is called upon to deal. It is too much to hope that what must be done in haste makes waste." In vital matters it is better to go slow. Certainly past legislation on this subject affords faint expectation that the problem has been so suddenly, not to say so violently, solved at this particular moment.

As to the actual merits of the proposed measure, all we know is that as the result of a series of conferences between leaders in the house, the last of which was the other day, Representative Vreeland of New York introduced a bill to take the place of the currency bill presented by him last week. In the new bill nothing is left of the Aldrich currency bill except the provision for the payment of interest on government deposits in national banks. The provisions for the issuance of emergency currency on corporate bonds are entirely swept away.

The new bill provides for the formation of national clearing house associations by not less than ten national banks having an aggregate capital and surplus of not less than \$5,000,000. A tax of 4 per cent on emergency circulation based on clearing house association securities is provided for the first month, this tax to be increased 1 per cent each month until it reaches 10 per cent, where it is to remain until the circulation is retired.

Another section of the bill provides for the creation of a currency commission, to consist of six members of the house, six of the senate and six to be appointed by the President.

The last section is no doubt indirectly intended to make the financial interests of the country breathe more

freely after learning that a bill of some sort is to be pushed through at once, but, if so, even this section will probably fail of accomplishing this immediate result for the reason that these interests are very timid—"abnormally sensitive," to use the language of those who most freely criticize the ways of capitalists. The commission itself will of course be an excellent thing; but as to the law, there seems to be no crisis that now justifies the passage of a measure of the vast and unforeseen consequences necessarily involved in a currency measure for the reformation of the monetary system of this nation.

ILLEGAL BUSINESS.

There should be no doubt that the slot machine business is illegal, notwithstanding Judge Diehl's somewhat famous decision. According to an act passed by the Legislature and approved March 14, 1901:

"Every person who keeps or operates, either as owner, agent or employee, or allows to be kept, used, operated, or conducted in his place of business, or elsewhere in this State, the device or instrument commonly known as the slot machine, or any other similar device or instrument for gambling, or exhibiting bawdy pictures, is guilty of a misdemeanor."

Gambling is defined by statute as follows:

"Every person who deals, plays, or carries on, opens or causes to be opened, or who conducts, either as owner or employee, whether for hire or not, any game of faro, monte, roulette, lancers, rummy, or other game, or any game played with cards, dice, or any other device, for money, checks, credit, or any other representative value, and every person who plays or bets at or against any of said prohibited games, is guilty of a misdemeanor."

It follows that anyone who keeps a device by which the public is invited to play for money, or checks, or credit, or any other value, is guilty of a misdemeanor; and so are they who patronize such devices.

The City ordinance relating to this subject says:

"It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or maintain for hire, gain, or reward, any device known or designated as a slot machine, or any license shall be issued for the operation or maintenance of any machine which is used for the purpose of gambling for money or other property."

If the statutes and ordinances relating to the subject are not plain enough, it is doubtful whether language can ever convey the mind and will of lawmakers.

If the Chief of Police is willing to put an end to this form of law-defiance, by which, it is charged, even the children of the community are taught to become gamblers, he can do so by issuing and enforcing a closing order. Perhaps another test case would then be tried, and there can hardly be any doubt of the result.

But, will the party bosses permit him? Those bosses have howled themselves hoarse against the mote in the eye of their neighbors, and they have no voice with which to ask someone to remove the beam in their own eye.

CHURCH AND STATE IN FRANCE.

M. Combes, writing for the *Neue Presse*, boasts that the French church is dead, as a result of the separation law for which he was largely responsible. He maintains that about two-thirds of the French Catholics have left the church. As quoted in the *Literary Digest*, he says:

"It can be said without fear of contradiction that the radical and socialist press have induced two-thirds, and perhaps three-fourths of the French Catholics to dissolve their connection with the Church. In any case the difference between the present number of adherents to the Catholic faith and the number fifty, or even forty years ago, is enormous. It would be a great mistake to regard among the number of such adherents all those who more or less often attend the ceremonies or join in the ecclesiastical acts of worship. If we take the word adherent in the sense of one who has a conscious belief in the Church, we shall find that if there be many wandering hearers, as Plato says, there are very few genuine mystics. The women form the majority of Christian believers, yet even these female believers make up a minority of the total number of French women."

In view of the conciliatory attitude the government found it necessary to assume under the Clemenceau ministry, in its relations with the church, the assertions of M. Combes seem almost ridiculous. Only a couple of weeks ago a new law was enacted by Parliament, providing for the devolution of church property, whose passage was made possible by the government's ready acceptance of a number of amendments intended to render it more acceptable to church interests. The bill provided that church property and religious endowments, which had been forfeited by the church owing to its refusal to accept certain provisions of the separation law, should be used for public charity, and among these endowments were included those for celebrating masses for the dead. Abbe Lemire, the clerical deputy in the chamber, had declared that this clause confiscating funds for masses was the only insuperable objection to the measure. And, although, according to Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, permanent endowments for masses for the dead are open to serious objections, the government changed the clause to meet the wishes of the church when the bill was before the senate. The government does not pay such deference to a dead church.

Bismarck committed the error of supposing that he could conquer the church in Germany. But he lived long enough to see his mistake, if not to acknowledge it. His "kulturkampf" resulted in the formation of a powerful clerical party that still lives, though Bismarck is dead.

The truth is that the church in France is more popular now than it was before the separation law was enacted. It is not considered improbable that the government before long will have to ask for a rapprochement, because of the collapse of public morals and the multiplication of disorders. It is thought probable that a reconciliation between the French government and papacy will come, as soon as the fact is recognized that the co-operation of the church is needed for the stability of government.

In the history of Bismarck's futile struggle in Germany and M. Combes' vain attempts in France to crush the church, there is a lesson to all persecutors. They are always in the wrong, whether their victims are right or wrong, and for that reason they must suffer defeat.

A new currency bill is born almost every day.

The whirr of the lawn mower is heard in the land.

It doesn't take a passive candidate long to become a passing candidate.

How those California people have been throwing bouquets at the sulor boys!

King Manuel having opened the Portuguese cortes, what will come out of it?

By concert-of action tonight the success of the cadets' excursion will be assured.

In its last days, April set May a splendid example of what spring weather should be.

The admission of wood pulp duty free will tend to preserve the forests of the United States.

When De Sagan leads Madam Gould to the altar, it will be a lead to fortune and to fame.

The peach crop won't be a failure this year until it is about time to put peaches on the market.

It cannot be said of the sailors from the fleet at Santa Barbara that they left not a wreck behind.

The United States has far more to fear from American predatory wealth than from foreign aggression.

The President may yet turn the tables on some of those who have tailed his legislative program.

With the House committee on banking and currency there is no difference between a table and a shelf.

A Los Angeles man paid for his automobile with a worthless check. Perhaps the machine was worthless; there are such.

Premier Asquith has nailed his free trade flag to the mast. Now the Conservatives will try to tear it down and nail it in a coffin.

The two-party editorial scheme suggested by Mr. Bryan is, all things considered, about the best yet devised for straddling the fence.

An authority says Eskimos frequently eat as much as twenty pounds of meat per day. That isn't much meat for all the Eskimos for one day.

If a boy smokes cigarettes and won't quit it, he can be sent to the reform school. Why can't the same treatment be meted out to the chimney that smoke?

It's a pity that all roads do not lead to San Francisco for then the rates to visit the place during the stay at the battleship fleet might be made really cheap.

In assuming that he can absolutely control and direct the organized labor vote, is not Mr. Gompers biting off a much bigger quid than he can chew?

"The Chicago Automobile club has begun a campaign for sane motoring. The crazy chauffeur must go," says an exchange. He does, and like sixty; that's the whole trouble.

Mrs. Bormann Wells, the English suffragette, demands protection of the New York police. If the lady wants protection she should apply to the House committee on ways and means.

ARBITRATION.

Chicago Record-Herald.

A few days ago the Senate ratified the arbitration treaty with Great Britain, though it has received many vigorous protests which were intended to prevent ratification. The treaty resembles in its general terms one that has been negotiated with France, but contains two provisions all its own. One of these is that the special agreements that are made according to the terms shall not be binding upon Great Britain before they are binding upon the United States. This stipulation is due to the intervention of our Senate as part of the treaty-making power, which may cause delay, and if the present British suggestion is a novel one it will be seen that it is a perfectly natural one and that it would merely put the two countries on even terms. The second provision to which we have referred relates to the self-governing British colonies. Before Great Britain undertakes to arbitrate a question in which any of these colonies is concerned, she must by the terms of the provision first secure the concurrence of the colony affected.

AWFUL AIRQUAKES.

Los Angeles Express.

Along comes a gentle and agreeable oscillation of the California earth that manages to break a few thin-skinned wine glasses and the eastern press discovers its satisfaction in big black headlines that frighten readers with tales of earthquakes. With the regularity of spring's coming, tremendous atmospheric disturbances there slay and injure hundreds upon hundreds. An awful sacrifice of life and treasure is offered in the tornados of each recurrent cyclonic April. How fortunate the people of this climate, relieved by the benevolence of nature of apprehension of such destructive airquakes.

IS CHRISTIANITY DECLINING?

Thomas Dixon, Jr., in Broadway Magazine.

There are fewer Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians in New York today than there were 25 years ago, though the city's population has been more than doubled. The rapid extinction of churches of these denominations in Manhattan during the past decade shows this. In 1880 the Methodists reported 64 churches. Last year they only claimed 48. Many of these churches are pitifully small—mere hives of mission halls and soup kitchens, supported by the charity of one or two rich men. One-half of them represent hopes as yet unfulfilled. The true thing is true of the Methodists, who reported 71 churches in 1880 and only claim 59 in 1907. The Presbyterians reported 71 in 1880 and only 57 last year. In the year 1840, New York City had one church to every 1,800 in population. Last year we could not find one church to 4,000 population, counting all our soup kitchens and mission halls as "churches." There are many sections of the city which are practically pagan. One district of 16,000 population, which is typical of many more, has one saloon to 111 inhabitants and one church to 8,196. In another large district there are some 50,000 inhabitants, with a saloon to every 200 people and a church to every 10,000. In the section between Twenty-fourth and Fifty-ninth streets west of Ninth avenue, there is but one church to 15,000; while the district between Fortieth and Sixty-fourth streets west of Tenth avenue contains 48,583 people, and has but one church. And the sad part of the story is that many of these churches that are reckoned on the map as living and performing their duties to these vast populations are dead and don't know it.

A CITY OF A MILLION HENS.
The World's Work.
Some 50 miles north of San Francisco, the town of Petaluma lies on a moor between low mountains. It is largely built upon the poultry industry. In the parts of some 50,000 county tributary to the town, over 123,000,000 eggs were produced in 1907, more than 10,000,000 dozen. At least 75 per cent of the people of the county raise poultry. It is not an occupation, in Petaluma men are chicken-raisers as they are elsewhere bankers, merchants or lawyers. One of the hatching plants has a capacity of 100,000. That is to say, it can, and does, when the season's demand is heavy, turn out 100,000 young chickens every two weeks. They go east to Kansas City, south into old Mexico, north into British Columbia. Duck eggs are also hatched out. In wholesale lots in incubators in this region. The Chinese are particularly fond of ducks when they have reached just a certain age. I think it is usually about nine weeks. Then the blood which was in the quills has reached the body and they can be plucked without bleeding. One raiser of ducks in the Petaluma region sold last year 80,000 ducks, averaging more than a dollar each. He sold 16,000 ducks at the nine-weeks' period for \$16,000 to Chinamen alone, and the rest to the Chinese. They came with their dollars and their huge, swaying shoulder-baskets, and took the ducks away without waiting for delivery.

JUST FOR FUN.

Then We'd Hear Things.

"It's in the world of politics," said the talkative man, "that the truth of the old saying 'money talks' is most frequently proved."
"Yes," replied the wise citizen, "but if hush money would only talk what sensations we would have!"—Exchange.

Wanted a Chance.

The Rector—And how would you like to be a clergyman when you grow up, Tommy?
The Boy—Not for me! I'm sick of wearin' things that button at the back. —Metropolitan Magazine.

Stage Youth.

Children's Society Agent—Before I can allow you to go on as little Eva in this performance, I must see the manager.
Little Eva—I am sure he can satisfy you. He is my son.—Baltimore American.

Same Symptoms.

"My love," said he, "I like the sea."
And the maiden answered quick: "I think it quite likely you're right—For they both make me sick."
—Chicago News.

Her Rise to Fame.

"Yes, she started in life as a poor shop girl."
"And now?"
"Now she's a saleslady."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Benefits of Smoking.

Bacon—Do you think smoking is injurious?
Egbert—On the contrary, I think it improves hams.—Yonkers Statesman.

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