DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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OUR MILITIA.

The military exercises at Fort Douglas Saturday amounted to more than a mere pastime for the amusement of the populace. They were of a highly interesting character from a standpoint of military science, and proved that Utah has an element of great value in her militia. While all good citizens wish that there may never be occasion to call this element into requisition for the maintenance of law, it is a matter of congratulation that the civil authority of our brave State will have recourse upon a power so effective in case of need.

There is another feature which rises up in connection with this subject, and is a source of congratulation. An important constitutional right, of which the people of Utah were for a long term of years deprived, has been restored, namely, the right to bear arms. Without unnecessarily awakening unpleasant memories, it is eminently proper that our citizens should felicitate themselves on being allowed this privilege of freemen.

It will do good to have a well trained militia. Such an institution is a wonderful conservator of the peace, especially when under the control of men who reverence the law and are disposed to see it obeyed and enforced, and there is no reason to believe that the National Guard of Utah will ever be under the command of men who are not of this sort. We congratulate the territory on the splendid showing they made yesterday, and on the remarkable rapidity with which they are acquiring proficiency in the art of war.

TIMES ARE IMPROVING.

Within a few days the price of sugar has materially advanced, notwithstanding the operations of the trust in this market. This is a matter of congratulation. It may seem strange for a newspaper to rejoice at an increase in the price of such a commodity as sugar, whose cheapness and the public welfare are usually considered inseparable. Yet just now, here in Utah, the advance in the price of sugar is a most gratifying development. It means two very good things. That the local industry has triumphed, and that the victory is due to a patriotic purpose on the part of the people to support home industries, and to make the pecuniary sacrifice necessary to that end.

In this matter we probably see the strongest and most practical proof that has yet been given of the growth of the home industry sentiment in this Territory, and it is a most encouraging sign of the times. It means that our people have reached a stage of unity which gives them control over their own prosperity, with power to enhance it indefinitely. If it is a fact, as it seems to be, that the people of Utah will persist in supporting the home sugar plant notwithstanding the competition of the trust, then there is every reason to believe that other important home industries will be raised in the same way, which means employment for our working people, the keeping of our means at home, and the creation of limitless wealth out of the elements and natural resources around us, which is to be related among us after being created.

For some months an agitation has been in progress among the owners of mines which are heavy producers of silver, and proprietors of smelters, looking to such a combination of interests as would advance, and prevent fluctuation in, the price of silver. Latest advices are to the effect that a degree of success is reasonably certain to be attained in this effort, and that, in consequence, the industry of silver mining will be benefited in this region.

Two or three years ago there was a great deal of interest, and in an experimental manner, some over the mines and smelters were made and partially carried out, but the game got a setback on account of a strike in this direction. Quite lately, however, symptoms of the most positive character have been given out that we may well be prepared for the very immediately, and it is not to be wondered a large number of miners will be furnished employment, to say nothing of the benefit of a cheaper bullion.

On the whole the financial outlook is decidedly encouraging, and affords ample evidence that our recuperation from the financial depression will be rapid, and that our future prosperity will exceed the expectation of the most sanguine among us.

THE INDIAN SITUATION.

The official reports sent in this week regarding the condition of the Indians in various parts of the country go to prove that the national view of the red man's progress and requirements depends very largely on the view of men the government sends out as agents or members of commissions. If the official is for mischief and possesses a timidly nature, these characteristics are exhibited in his treatment of the question; if he is actively partisan and selfish, his report takes on a coloring of that sort. This is clearly set forth in the official reports sent out by telegraph on the 21st and 22nd of this month. The latter date has two reports from New Mexico representatives. One, from Captain Bailey, states that the Pueblo Indians are progressing forwardly toward civilization; the other, from Captain Burnett, represents the opposite to be the condition of Mescalero. Captain Bailey's report indicates patience, tolerance, and a practical belief in the idea that the Indians can be educated to a standard of usefulness as a citizen. Therefore the fruits of his work as agent are in harmony with that view. Captain Burnett's report shows a disposition to be middlesome, irritable and tyrannical, and the course he describes accord with that policy. The reports of the five civilized represent antagonistic conditions. That from Minnesota is of a most encouraging and commendatory character, while the report to the secretary of the interior by the commissioners to the five civilized tribes in the Indian Territory must be placed in the opposite class.

The report last named is worthy of special attention because it is likely to receive particular notice from the government. The five civilized tribes visited by the commission are the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks and Seminoles. Two full bloods among them, the commission declares, "are less fit for citizenship than they were twenty years ago, and there is little hope they will improve." Upon the general findings, the commission recommends that the lands now held in common by the tribes be taken control of by the United States, and that "the power of self government in the tribes be revoked." In support of these recommendations it is urged that the tribes have demonstrated their incapacity to govern themselves, and that a lawless condition of affairs exists in the territory; that the treaty stipulations for equal division of land is flagrantly and wickedly violated, large tracts being in the control of leaders, while the real Indians powerless to secure any part of the common property; and finally, that the Indians refused to accept an allotment of their lands, and the sale of the balance, comprising townsites, coal and mineral lands, the proceeds to be divided among the members of the tribes.

To the uninformed, it might seem, from the reports that come in the dispatches, that there is a measure of truth in these statements which justifies the recommendations of the commission. An inquiry into the actual state of affairs, however, will reveal to any man who sincerely desires to deal fairly and honestly by the Indians the fact that the recommendations made are of the most unjust and reprehensible character. This view expressed with due consideration for the high political standing of those who made up the commission, and who, it might be charitable to say, probably were misled by indulging persons during their brief stay in the Indian territory.

Taking up the proposition that the treaty stipulation for equal division is flagrantly violated by whom? The reply is, by white men principally; and instances may be cited where the largest tracts of land, lots of thousands of acres in extent, are held by United States officials. If the possession is unlawful, the government should purge its own representatives. And as to the lawless condition of affairs described, it is one chiefly to white thieves who have gone in to rob the Indians of the money recently distributed, and whom it is the duty of the government peace officers in the territory to deal with. Upon these propositions, then, it is upon the general government rather than upon the five tribes that the blame of them should rest.

As to the statement that the tribes have reduced their incapacity to govern themselves to coal mining and therefore should be deprived of the small power they now exercise in that direction, it can be stated upon an understanding of the conditions among those tribes, that in cases with the commission. The majority of the five civilized tribes, at least as they have opportunity to show it, to govern themselves is equally as good as in many of the communities east of the Mississippi which are called on to exercise a very similar function. It is proposed to treat these Indians. Asking the tribes referred to there has been a full, free, and candid discussion of the question, that the majority are read and write, and of the younger people the great majority can read and write the English language, which is now taught exclusively in the schools. Upon this condition of affairs, the statement of the commission that the Indians "are less fit for citizenship than they were twenty years ago, and there is little hope they will improve," must fall to the ground because of its inaccuracy. The commission evidently has a much higher opinion of the claims of twenty years ago than the facts warrant. It may be added that the five tribes have a fairly good government among themselves, notwithstanding a great laxity in enforcing the laws, but that laxity does not affect the original case for the extraordinary measure proposed.

The gist of the whole scheme disclosed by the report may be stated from the sentiment that the Indians owes to sell the most valuable part of their lands. If the allotment plan were carried out, more than half the land now held by the civilized tribes would be opened to settlement by the white man; the valuable coal and mineral lands would pass from Indian ownership and control, and the white man would reap the benefit of the change. Then, with the greatest almighty dispersed of all ties to local government, the white settlers would have absolute and undisputed control, and the authority and practical management of the five tribes would be complete. That is the sum of the whole matter. The cry that the Indians will not consent to a distribution of their lands among themselves is a subterfuge. If the proposition for an equitable distribution were made, it is not unlikely that they could be converted readily to the plan. What they object to is being compelled to surrender the most valuable part of that which they now possess the title to in common, and to overcome their objection and silence them it is proposed to add the penalty of disfranchisement. If such a scheme as that proposed should be carried out it would add a darker page to the government's Indian policy than any of those which now darken its volume of history.

TOO HASTY ANGER.

There have been many instances in the history of municipalities in this country when the lethargy of officials in enforcing city ordinances has required prompt and vigorous action on the part of citizens, irrespective of creed or party, in order to secure a competent administration of affairs. A case of this kind is shown in the recent experience of Chicago, where a combination of citizens, known as the Civic Federation, proved a majority in accomplishing municipal reform. On this particular occasion, however, the citizens' committee referred to seems to have become possessed of an extreme idea of its importance and power, and has performed an act that robs it of much of its dignity and the esteem in which it was held while it conducted affairs on a conservative yet vigorous basis.

Less than three months ago the legislation began its crusade against the gambling evil which had grown to stupendous proportions in Chicago. The city authorities had shown an unlawful tolerance toward the wrong, and there had been apparent an official determination not to interfere with the gambling fraternity in their nefarious calling. It was announced by the Civic Federation that "a condition shocking to civilization existed—that of the officers and appointees selected and paid by the people to execute and administer the laws constituting the chief obstacle to their enforcement, and even themselves in many instances giving a protection of political revenue from the perverted offenders, the interest of the criminal and vicious classes seemed to dominate and control to a great extent both the execution and administration of the laws and ordinances concerning gambling." Under this state of affairs the federation called a meeting at which City Attorney Rubens, voicing the intentions of the mayor, John P. Hopkins, declared that while Mr. Hopkins stood at the head of the municipality public gambling houses would remain closed. Following this came a proclamation from the mayor, and the objectionable houses shut their doors. Then when efforts were made to reopen them, they had to meet the weight of an official crusade vigorously pursued.

This week there has been another development in the proceedings which, as the matter now stands, places the Civic Federation in the position of proceeding upon unauthorized assertions and of having acted hastily and unfairly in launching a caustic criticism of the city officials. The federation sent a communication to Mr. Hopkins, requesting that on his proclamation and the official energy which followed it, the gambling houses were suppressed for a time, but that recently all of them opened at the old stands, with many new ones in other localities, while the condition was made that at the time of writing there were "thirty-five of them now wide open." This followed the charge of lack of good faith against Mayor Hopkins, and other accusations couched in very severe language. To this the mayor responded a reply which placed at bay every allegation of the federation to the effect that there had been any relaxity shown of late by the gamblers. He called for the proof of a single instance where gambling was being conducted openly or anywhere, and he insisted that it has been suppressed and was being kept down so far as official power could accomplish it under the circumstances, and pointed out that a spirit of fairness and courtesy would have suggested that such serious charges should not have been made to rest him merely on "common report" cited by the federation and in the absence of any specific proof for their substantiation.

The industry of the federation to furnish the proof demanded, and the intemperate language used toward the mayor, have had the effect of creating a distrust in the minds and sympathies of the conservative element of those who joined the aggressive movement, while giving strength to the opposite element. Personally the mayor seems to have the nerve to stand unfavorable against lawlessness, and is doing so in making strenuous efforts to secure the complete moral purge of the police department from city politics, so he believes that by such means the evils formerly complained of will be more easily eradicated and overcome. But just the same the quarrel in the reform ranks is regrettable, though it may serve as a warning to citizens' committees that when their place are removing sinners from their midst, though things may not move quite as quickly as they might desire, it is not well to stock over the traces kick to pieces the very parts of the vehicle which, with reasonable care and patience, must enable them to reach the desired goal. Civic reform committees, when backed by public sentiment, may compel official action in harmony with their views, when they proceed on conservative and dignified lines; but when they become autocratic, disorganized and impervious, as the Chicago committee appears to have done, their influence for good diminishes to a commensurate degree. Possibly the Civic Federation had some cause to complain in the present instance, but by getting angry it loosened its grip to its own disadvantage.

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Just over the Corner.

In the presidential election of two years ago and the one just passed, should hands the man who are the most to represent the people in their national affairs, that the people are keeping take on them very poorly, and will stand no more monkeying.

In times of general prosperity, people become very lax in keeping themselves posted on what their people representatives are doing, but when it becomes hard for them to make both ends meet, they need a pretty thorough investigation to sure to relieve, and the untrained members are pretty effectually weeded out, and the process continues until an honest administration is obtained and general prosperity again resumed.

We are one of the opinion that the coming change in the congress will produce any rather radical reform legislation, and it will also result in a decided increase in the manufacturing, commercial and financial circles and a free and unlimited money prosperity and value to property. To be sure.

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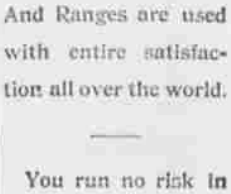

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