

COUNTY SCHOOL TAX.

SALT LAKE CITY, Feb. 17, 1897.

Yesterday the members of the House voted almost unanimously in favor of submitting to the people of the State an amendment to the Constitution in relation to the school tax question.

There are three kinds of taxation for the support of schools, the State school tax which is three mills, the county school tax which is two mills in Salt Lake county for the present year, and the district tax the maximum rate of which is twenty mills.

The recent decision of the Supreme Court, based upon the word "maintained" in the Constitution, has liberated all cities of the first and second class from paying the county school tax, thus leaving such cities but two kinds of taxes to pay for the support of schools while other districts no matter how rich must pay three kinds of taxes to maintain the schools.

The city school tax in Salt Lake City corresponds to the district school tax in school districts outside the city and in Salt Lake county, and is not so big as is paid in many of said country districts.

Take for example district No. 40, Farmers ward, the district school tax levied there is five mills, six-tenths of a mill lower than is levied in the city, but remember that the two mill county school tax levied in district No. 40, but not in Salt Lake City, makes its tax seven mills or one and four-tenths mills greater than is paid in the city. Yet Farmers ward is as many times richer than the other districts in Salt Lake county, as Salt Lake City is richer than the county outside the city. It pays as much in proportion to its value as does Salt Lake City to support the schools of the State, and has always paid more into the State school fund than it received back. The rich in the district are taxed not only for the poor, but for the poor of the State and of the county. The same is true of Sugar, Murray, Sandy and other districts. Should it not be true of Salt Lake City and Ogden? If the rich cities are to be excused from taxation on the ground that they pay more than they receive back, should not rich country districts be excused for the same reason, and would it not follow that the rich individual be also excused.

We do not ask of these cities more than we are willing to give, but we insist that the burdens for carrying the free school system fall equally upon all.

The business and educational interests of Salt Lake county are so closely identified with those of the city that a blow struck at the growth and prosperity of either will surely be retroactive to the other, working an injury to our growing fame as promoters of education. True, the city has annually paid some \$16,000 into the county school fund more than it has received back, but do we county people not give much toward the building up of the city? We were taxed to build that magnificent city and county building. We are taxed to maintain (and that too in the city) our entire county government. All our roads lead to the city. All our produce finds market there, but

whether we sell or buy the profits remain where the city is enriched. The entire county banks in the city. Can the city not afford the slight expenditure of \$16,000 per annum in order to surround itself with an army of nearly seven thousand educated boys and girls?

The Legislature will do nothing but its duty in submitting the proposed amendment to the Constitution to the people of the State.

I am informed by many members of the Constitutional convention that they never intended Section VI, Article X, of the Constitution to do more than to separate the supervision of the city schools from that of the county. Make it possible for the schools of both city and county districts to continue. Amend the Constitution.

OSCAR VAN COTT.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

At a meeting of the State Bar Association of Utah, held on February 8, 1897, Hon. Charles S. Varian, the president, was authorized to appoint a committee of two to prepare certain amendments to the Constitution and confer with members of the Legislature in relation to the adoption thereof. In pursuance of this authority, Mr. Varian appointed Messrs. F. S. Richards and W. H. Dickson to prepare the desired amendments, and yesterday these gentlemen appeared before the joint judiciary committee of the Legislature and explained the effect of the amendments, which are as follows:

"The following proposition to amend the Constitution of the State of Utah is hereby submitted to the qualified electors of the State for their approval or rejection, namely: That section nine, article eight, be amended so the same shall read as follows: Section 9. From all final judgments of the district courts, and from such orders and interlocutory decrees of said courts as may be provided by law, there shall be a right of appeal to the Supreme court. The appeal shall be upon the record made in the court below, and under such regulations as may be provided by law. In equity cases the appeal may be on questions of both law and fact; in cases at law the appeal shall be on questions of law alone. Appeals shall also lie from the orders and decrees of the court in the administration of decedent estates, and in cases of guardianship as shall be provided by law. Appeals shall also lie from the final judgment of justices of the peace in civil and criminal cases to the district courts on both questions of law and fact, with such limitations and restrictions as shall be provided by law; and the decision of the district courts on such appeals shall be final, except in cases involving the validity or constitutionality of a statute.

"The following proposition to amend the Constitution of the State of Utah is hereby submitted to the qualified electors of the State for their approval or rejection, namely: That section twenty-two, article six, be amended so that the same shall read as follows: Section 22. The enacting clause of every law shall be: "Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Utah," and no bill or

joint resolution shall be passed, except with the assent of a majority of all the members elected to each house of the Legislature, and after it has been read three times, unless in case of emergency, two-thirds of the house where such bill may be pending shall deem it expedient to dispense with some of such readings, but the reading of a bill by sections, on its final passage, shall in no case be dispensed with. The vote upon the final passage of all bills shall be by yeas and nays; and no law shall be revised or amended by reference to its title only; but the act as revised, or section as amended, shall be re-enacted and published at length.

"The following proposition to amend the Constitution of the State of Utah is hereby submitted to the qualified electors of the State for their approval or rejection, namely: That article six be amended by adding thereto an additional section that shall read as follows: Section 32. Every bill and joint resolution signed by the presiding officer of each house of the Legislature, as provided in section 24 of this Article, and signed by the Governor or passed by both houses over his objections, as provided in section 8, Article 7 of this Constitution, and deposited in the office of the Secretary of State shall, in all courts, be taken and treated as conclusive evidence of its due enactment and authenticity."

The purpose and effect of these amendments would be to extend the right of appeal from district courts to the Supreme court, to cases of temporary injunctions and other similar decrees and interlocutory orders; to permit the Legislature, in case of emergency, to dispense with the first or second reading of a bill, and to make the signature of the presiding officer of each house, the approval of the Governor and the filing with the secretary of state conclusive evidence of the due enactment of bills and joint resolutions.

FILMORE ITEMS.

FILMORE, Millard County, February 17, 1897,

Millard county's prospects for the future are encouraging. Our mild winter and large snowfall have soaked the ground deeper down than for many years past, and with the large amount of snow providentially stored up in the mountains, every farmer begins to feel anxious to get to work, with assurance of a bounteous response to his toil.

County Attorney James A. Melville arrived home last night from a business visit to Salt Lake City, and brings good news to the effect that he met there some gentlemen from the East, who assured him that the great Millard county canal project would be consummated during the year 1897, and that a locating party would arrive at Lemmington by special car from Salt Lake City last night, among whom would be Mr. Cavanaugh of New York, and Mr. Hush of Philadelphia. Mr. Cavanaugh will remain in this vicinity for about three weeks. Mr. Hush promised to visit Fillmore with the former gentleman before leaving for their homes in the East. It was also stated that Mr. Voongestal, the famous engineer who had charge of the Java canal works, would be the chief en-