

## DESERET EVENING NEWS

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## DESERET NEWS PHONES.

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## THE PRESENT LEGISLATURE

The Sixth regular session of the Leg-  
islature of the State of Utah has con-  
vened. It is composed of representative  
men from every county in the State.  
Some of them are experienced in legis-  
lative affairs, (like the President  
of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
House), others are new to the  
business, but all are prominent in their  
local circles and are trusted servants of  
the people who elected them. They are  
expected to study and act in the public  
interest.The needs and desires of their im-  
mediate constituents must necessarily  
press upon their attention, but they are  
chosen to legislate for the whole State,  
not merely for one of its districts. This  
should always be kept in mind. Private  
bills, personal schemes, local appropri-  
ations may be worthy of attention and  
investigation, and each should be con-  
sidered on its own merits; but the broad  
question of the public good and the  
proper and economical expenditure of  
the public funds, should rise above in-  
dividual clamorings and sectional or  
speculative demands.Every session of the Legislature  
gives occasion for the introduction of  
numerous measures more or less need-  
less, and of a nature to load down our  
statute books with puerile or  
utterly useless enactments. These  
should be disposed of at the  
start or thrown out in committee,  
and not suffered to enter into debates which  
waste time and hinder necessary legisla-  
tion.We suggest that the common practice  
of dilatory procedure in the early days  
of the session, with undue haste as a  
consequence toward the close, and the  
prolongation of its legitimate period,  
should not be repeated. There is time  
enough allotted by law for the work of  
the assembly, and by entering upon it  
as quickly as practicable there need be  
no running over that time at the end.If the gentlemen elected to work for  
the good of the whole State will keep  
before them their duty in this regard,  
they will frown down all fads, suppress  
all propositions for the sole benefit of a  
person or a party, avoid the wiles of  
mere theorists in political economy,  
pass such measures only as are for the  
benefit of the entire commonwealth,  
and exhibit that patriotism which  
should inspire every lawmaker in the  
land, the Sixth session of the Legisla-  
ture of the State of Utah will shine out  
as a star assembly, and its members  
live in the hearts of the people with  
affectionate and respectful remem-  
brance. We welcome them to the capitol  
and to the important labors that de-  
volve upon them.

## PRESS CENSORSHIP.

The governor of Pennsylvania recom-  
mends, in his message to the legisla-  
ture, the passage of a law aimed at  
libelous newspapers. His proposition is  
that the habitual publication and dis-  
semination of falsehoods, defama-  
tion, or scandal, be by legal enactment  
declared a nuisance, to be suppressed  
after due trial and conviction.From time to time similar sugges-  
tions are made in this country, but so  
far without practical results.  
The liberty of the press is one of the  
great boons of this country, and it is  
generally felt that it would be danger-  
ous to adopt any measures of restric-  
tion. It is better to be on the safe  
side, even if abuses occur, on the prin-  
ciple that it is better to let the taxes  
and wheat grow together for a time,  
than by unwise zeal to destroy the  
good seed.But, with all possible allowance it  
must be admitted that the daily abuse  
of the liberty of the press in this  
country, form a discouraging testi-  
mony to the fitness of many scribes to  
address the public. They are utterly  
unfit, because they know not how to  
exercise that censorship which a gen-  
erous government has entrusted them  
with, in abolishing all official censor-  
ship. And so they spread before the  
public anything that will sell—false-  
hoods, scandal, fake stories, all goes.  
We see no possible remedy except in  
an enlightened public opinion. If read-  
ers can be made to see that moral  
poison is not what they want,  
they will speedily apply the corrective  
of the abuses of the press, by simply  
refusing patronage to that part of it  
which shows itself unworthy of publicconfidence, by selling fakes for news,  
and scandal for mental poison.Those who make it a practice to  
abuse the liberty of the press generally  
urge that they have a right to "criti-  
cize public officials," and that "pub-  
licity is the best remedy against cor-  
ruption." There is truth in this. But  
the right to criticize public officials in  
their official acts, does not include the  
right to publish falsehoods about their  
private lives and affairs, in order to  
destroy their usefulness, and, as it  
were, assassinate both them and their  
friends. The method of the Serbian  
revolutionists who murdered the royal  
couple and all their supporters, in or-  
der to attain their ends, is not justified,  
in journalism or anywhere else.That most of those who insist on  
their right to "criticize" and to em-  
ploy "publicity" are character-assassina-  
tors is very evident from their atti-  
tude. They never criticize their own  
friends and followers, no matter how  
rotten they are. Nor do they lay bare  
the skeletons in their own closets. They  
do not, then, come out for fairness,  
morality, and purity for their own sake,  
but they assume the position of cham-  
pionship in behalf of these virtues,  
merely to blindfold the public while  
they are, as it were, assassinating their  
opponents. Such alleged "champions"  
are contemptible beyond expression. No  
reputable publication that is honestly  
striving to do its duty toward the public  
can have anything to do with such  
plotting who hide under the cover of a  
free press. But the public itself must  
exercise the only effective censorship.It is an important subject, and it can  
do no harm to have the attention drawn  
occasionally to the existing abuses, by  
the discussion of them by governors  
and legislative assemblies.

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

The New York World notes that there  
were, during the past year, in New  
York, 331 "homeless" of crime or of  
neglect, and 147 homicides in the nar-  
rower sense, including deliberate mur-  
ders. This is contrasted with the num-  
ber of homicides in London during 1903,  
which was only 24.Conan Doyle recently said that  
"whether measured by murder, rob-  
bery, divorce or any other symptom,  
the irregular state of things in the  
United States not only exceeds any  
European country, but bids fair to  
exceed all European countries com-  
bined."Andrew D. White has asserted that  
high crime is more common in this  
country than anywhere else in the  
world save Sicily. He declared that if  
we did not develop better methods,  
meaning stronger methods, of repre-  
ssing and punishing criminals, our  
existence would be short and the Anglo-  
Saxon would be sure to die out and  
would be succeeded by a cruder race of  
tougher fiber.This is probably the key to the trou-  
ble. Our laws, though excellent, are  
not executed with the firmness and uni-  
formity that impartiality demands, and  
therefore they are too often inoperative.  
In London there were, during the year  
1903, twenty-four homicides and twenty  
convictions. In New York, last year,  
there were 147 homicides, and twenty-  
seven convictions. That tells the entire  
story. The mode of treating criminals  
in London and New York is a "tale of  
two cities," that should be carefully  
contemplated on this side of the ocean.

## CONVICT BARRED.

The Massachusetts legislature faced  
a peculiar situation. When it met, one  
of its members was a prisoner for viola-  
tion of some federal statute, and his  
place was declared vacant. But the  
strange feature about this is, that the  
felony was in jail when elected to the  
office of a legislator. It seems that he  
carried on his campaign from the jail,  
as his office. The minds of citizens  
must be peculiarly constituted when  
they decide upon casting their votes  
for such a representative. One of the  
legislators was prepared to introduce  
a bill making convicts ineligible to  
elective office for five years—a piece of  
legislation which, but for the special  
conditions, would have been thought  
almost unnecessary. But there were  
good reasons for thinking the bill un-  
constitutional, and the house saved the  
situation by declaring the seat vacant.

## NAME FOR STATE.

Many suggestions have been made for  
a name for the proposed new state—  
Arizona and New Mexico. Some think  
that an artificial word formed of letters  
picked out of the two names would an-  
swer the purpose. "Arizo," "Arizo,"  
etc., have been proposed. But the trou-  
ble with all artificial words is that they  
are dead. There is no soul in them.  
They may sound well, but they have no  
meaning. Think of "Csona" for the  
United States, for instance! But a cor-  
respondent of the New York Evening  
Post proposes "Rio Grande" as an  
appropriate name. The only objection  
to that is that it is Spanish and not  
American. It means about the same as  
"Mississippi," we are told, while Con-  
necticut means "the long river," and  
Tennessee "the great, crooked river."  
It is not easy to find new acceptable  
names for states. It is worse than to  
find names for children. But Indian  
names are often both euphonious and  
significant.It was Jackson day yesterday. It  
was religiously observed.Governor Cutler has more appoint-  
ments with people than for them.Much advice will be tendered the Leg-  
islature, but none better than this:  
Go slow.The meeting between Stossel and  
Nogi was far more historical than dra-  
matic.Chauncey M. Depew says that nothing  
succeeds like succeeding yourself in  
the Senate.It is proposed to establish the whip-  
ping post in Washington. The party  
whips have not asked for it.

Can Governor Alva Adams make ob-

jection to Governor Peabody's midnight  
appointments when it was an Adams  
who first set the example?Mrs. Astor has issued twelve hundred  
invitations to her ball tonight, the  
grandest of all she has ever given. By  
what magic are the "400" made "1200"?The new woman of fifty is a fixed  
feature of city life," says the New York  
Sun. At that age her features are gen-  
erally fixed whether or no her position  
is.The Denver public library is to be  
built of Indiana stone because it costs  
too much, forsooth, to use Colorado  
stone. It looks much like a case of car-  
rying coals to Newcastle.Governor-elect Douglas of Massa-  
chusetts, has on his staff five generals,  
eight colonels, five majors and a select  
bunch of captains and lieutenants. Sol-  
omon in all his glory was not arrayed  
like this.A semi-weekly mail delivery seems to  
have been established in this city. At  
least we judge so when a local letter  
is put in the postoffice Wednesday,  
January 4, and is not delivered until  
Saturday, January 7.Mr. T. V. Powderly, former head of  
the Knights of Labor, takes a very op-  
timistic view of the future relations  
between capital and labor. A good fact  
government job usually inclines a man  
to optimism.The Kansas City Star approvingly  
quotes this from Ezekiel: "As I live,  
saith the Lord God, surely with a  
mighty hand, and with a stretched out  
arm, and with fury poured out, will I  
rule over you." Isn't this un-American  
and subversive of republican govern-  
ment?Dr. Crum has finally been confirmed  
as collector of the port of Charleston,  
S. C. The fight against him was long  
and bitter, but senatorial courtesy was  
finally set aside and his nomination  
confirmed notwithstanding the protests  
of Senator Tillman. The President has  
been very persistent in this case and  
has finally won. The only objection to  
Dr. Crum was that he was a negro,  
though not full blooded."Miss Estelle Wyman of San Francis-  
co is entitled to the freedom of the city.  
Annoyed upon a New York street by  
an odious ogling person, who must be  
called a man only for convenience of  
brevity, Miss Wyman 'crossed' him,  
and with one hand at his collar and the  
other behind his back sent him sprawling  
in the mud. She says she learned the  
trick in the San Francisco high school,  
which cannot be accused of neglecting  
practical subjects," says the  
New York World.

## SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR.

Pueblo Chieftain.

So far as Port Arthur is concerned,  
the entry of the Japanese armies will  
doubtless be the beginning of Japanese  
preparations for another siege when  
the positions of the two armies may be  
reversed, and the Japanese may be de-  
fending the gates of Korea against Rus-  
sian attack.

Kansas City World.

Moreover, the Russians will have to  
reacquire Port Arthur before they can  
regain the ground they have lost, and  
the siege just closed is a sufficient in-  
dication of the time and sacrifice that  
will be required to dislodge the Japs  
from the citadel they have so dearly  
won.

Chicago Record-Herald.

It is a great cause of satisfaction that  
the surrender of Port Arthur makes un-  
necessary the capture of the remaining  
forts by assault. Had the defense con-  
tinued to be maintained to the very  
end, it would not indeed have been im-  
probable that the capture of the city in  
its final hours would have taken on  
more the character of a massacre than  
of war. It is well that the world is  
spared the sight of that horror.

Kansas City Star.

The gallant defense made by the Port  
Arthur garrison has attracted the ad-  
miration of the world. For ten months  
it endured an aggressive siege by some  
of the finest of modern soldiers. Little  
by little the defenders were driven back  
by a series of desperate attacks into  
the inner fortifications. The undoubt-  
ed fortitude displayed by General Sto-  
essel and his soldiers more than atoned  
for the rather childishly spectacular  
boasting of the commander. So far as  
can be judged from the information  
made public, there has been no more  
heroic defense in history than that of  
the Russians 5,000 miles from home on  
the Liao Tung peninsula.

Los Angeles Express.

Possibly the fall of Port Arthur may  
sound the death knell to the war by  
ending the reign of tyranny and cor-  
ruption that for so long a time has  
cursed and embittered the Muscovite  
nation. With the appeal of the remem-  
bered fresh in mind with students,  
the lower order of the Russian clergy,  
and high officials and army officers  
pointing to the "demon" for the abolition  
of the present absolute system, who  
can say that the enlightenment of the  
Russian people is not near at hand?

San Francisco Chronicle.

The surrender of Port Arthur comes  
opportunistically for the Russian who  
sells to the relief of the beleaguered  
stronghold. There is scarcely any doubt  
that disaster to the Russians would  
have followed a cession to the Japs  
of the fleet sent to meet the relieving  
vessels. Under the circumstances, the  
Czar may esteem himself lucky, for an  
arrangement might have cost him num-  
bers of ships, which may now return to  
the Baltic and serve as the nucleus of  
a new navy. Perhaps the ending of Von  
Stoessel's gallant resistance was influ-  
enced by the desire to accomplish this  
result.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Business Woman's Magazine for Jan-  
uary opens with a paper of "Montana"  
by W. J. Wice. This is followed by an  
article on "Revolutionary Mothers," by  
Carrie Christian Kunkely. Other inter-  
esting contributions are: "Where Is  
Xenia?" Adelaide Reynolds Hilde-  
man; "What Women Are Doing To-  
day," Linda Lee; "Living Thoughts of  
Leading Thinkers," A. R. H.; "A  
Modern Macdonald's Christmas," M. Ma-  
hida Moody; "The Hawaiian Islands,"  
Bayard Craig; and "John Morgan,"  
Rev. Geo. M. Darley, D. D.—Denver,  
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