

they might redeem themselves from present distress without loss of self-respect or practical forfeiture of their property. To generous men of wealth who would like to unite in some undertaking for the benefit of the unfortunate, but do not know what to do, it commends the idea of a legitimate pawnshop on a scale suitable to an experiment, and capable of expansion if the business warrants the investment. The idea does not seem to be a bad one by any means, and it has met with considerable encouragement. The workings of the experiment will be watched with interest in many other places where similar conditions exist and a similar remedy may be worth trying.

THE TAXATION OF MORTGAGES.

At first sight, and indeed in every view which the NEWS has as yet been able to give it, one of the bills already introduced into the lower house of the Territorial Assembly is ill-timed, impolitic, and unjust, and hence ought to be defeated. We refer to the measure to provide for the taxation of debts secured by mortgages and trust deeds, and repealing the law of the last Legislature exempting such possessions from taxation. The matter is one which need invoke neither party opposition nor party support. It deserves to be discussed on its merits; and the NEWS can accordingly consider it without any suspicion of partisanship.

The question of taxation is one that has puzzled more legislative brains than any other that ever arose since the world was made. In general it may be said that the very best plan of taxation contains features of inequality and injustice; the one that is the best is the one that contains the fewest of these; the ingenuity of man has not yet been equal to the task of devising one in which none of them appear. Similarly it may be said that common justice would suggest the laying of taxes against him who is best able to pay them; and as the rich man owns more than the poor man, and as he, through that fact, is and ought to be forced to bear the larger burden of taxation, so should the man who has money to lend rather than the man who is forced to borrow, pay the tax on the sum thus temporarily transferred. We admit that all this looks proper and incontrovertible and just.

But as a matter of fact, it does not work well in practice. The borrower invariably pays the tax. He may not pay it to the tax collector, but if not, he pays it to the money-lender. The latter has the one object ever in view—to make his money yield him a certain per cent in interest. Now, does any one suppose that if a capitalist is willing to loan money at 6 per cent, the borrower to pay the taxes, he will also be willing to loan at 6 per cent if he himself must pay the tax? It is idle to expect such generosity; capitalists are not built that way. The only conclusion is, therefore, that whether the lender or the borrower be legally held for the tax, the result in the end is the same,—the borrower has to pay it.

So much for the actual workings of the case. Now as to the particular conditions and circumstances that add

importance to the question as it affects the community at this time. Whether fortunately or unfortunately, we are large borrowers. Eastern and western money been has invested or loaned here and at certain rates of interest, fixed after an understanding that the mortgages securing it were exempt from taxation—that the property paid the tax. If the proposed law be enacted, the rate of interest on this money will be raised at once. But that is not the only or worst feature. The money will be withdrawn as quickly as possible, because the proverbial timidity of capital will cause it to shun a locality where legislative temper can in so short a time show such fickleness and change. ▲ It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, either to renew the old loans at all, or to secure new ones, the foreclosing process will start—and no one knows where it will end.

It would be fortunate perhaps if the people of Utah were so abundantly supplied with money of their own that they did not need to borrow at all. As at present arranged, however, we seem to need outside capital to develop our resources and keep us going—at least, the records show that we have obtained a great deal. As long as this is our condition, we must cater a little to the wishes of those whose money we employ. And the next best thing to having all the money of our own that we need, is the having of such reputation for fairness, stability and thorough honesty that we can get all the money we want, and at the best rates, from elsewhere. The NEWS doesn't believe the bill now before the House is calculated to strengthen that kind of a reputation just at the present time.

LEARN IN YOUTH.

The instructions given by the Prophet Alma to his son Helaman afford food for thoughtful consideration by the young men in Israel today, as well as by some of more mature years. Said Alma:

Oh remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God; yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest, let it be in the Lord; yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever; counsel the Lord in all thy doings, and He will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night, lie down unto the Lord, that He may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning, let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things ye shall be lifted up at the last day.

There are many people who think it unnecessary for the young to undergo a work of preparation to fit them for religious duties in life, and who argue that the rule of the scriptures is that in the very hour they need it shall be given to them what to say. Such an open construction as this to the sentiment quoted may well receive careful examination before it is adopted, as it involves a direct contradiction of the inspired counsel of the

Prophet Alma. It is true that under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost men comparatively unlearned have founded those wise and prudent after the manner of the world, and will continue to do so. And it is also true that the men so blessed with a gift from the Source of superior knowledge did not acquire it through a wilful rejection or neglect of the opportunity to acquire the information and power which came to them as a revelation from heaven. It was rather their eagerness to obtain that knowledge and their realization of the necessity of its possession which wrought their faith up to the point of receiving it. Had any of them rejected in earlier life the opportunity for gaining the required understanding it would not have been bestowed upon them as a divine gift until they had repented of their former folly. A lesson of the experiences referred to is that unavoidable illiteracy is not a disqualification for receiving the blessings and exercising the powers of heaven; but it does not follow that wilful ignorance is a qualification.

The possession and proper use of an understanding of the sciences, of history, and of other branches of education, are an advantage to a servant of the Lord, notwithstanding assertions sometimes made to the contrary in public assemblages. It is a fact that there are many instances where the Latter-day Saint Elders have received this understanding by direct revelation in the time of necessity; the possession of the knowledge thus obtained, not their ignorance of the revelation bestowed, is what gave them power. Its sudden manifestation to them was a marked evidence of the interest of the Almighty in their behalf in the work they were performing; if the knowledge had been gained by them under other circumstances and through study, it would have been just as much a providence of the Lord in preparing for the special occasion of its use, though its acquirement may have shown less contrast with surrounding conditions.

Where a man of high educational attainments, however, seeks to minister as a servant of the Lord in the strength of his individual powers and outside of perfect reliance on the Almighty, he closes, by this course, the door to divine instruction. In his self-sufficiency he says in effect that he does not need the information which the Lord may have to reveal, consequently he is not in harmony with the Almighty and is not sustained by Him. So, when a man less learned concludes that he will not acquire an understanding of correct principles when in the providence of the Lord the opportunity is given him, he is in a similar state to the other in his antagonism to the purposes of the Almighty. Both are in the situation of refusing to receive light, and thereby set a premium upon ignorance of the divine will.

The Lord commands His people to seek wisdom by study and also by faith. The advice of Alma to his son to learn wisdom in his youth and the promise that the servants of the Lord will receive inspiration in the time of need, are exponents of principles of divine truth that operate in perfect accord. Those who rely