DESERET EVENING NEWS.

DESERET NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY, LESSEES.

TUESDAY, - FEBRUARY 25, 1896.

The Deseret Evening News is published every Monday morning, at corner Main and East Temple streets, Salt Lake City.

Twice Weekly at 3:30 p. m. Regular Edition at 8 o'clock.

The Deseret Semi-Weekly News is published on Tuesday and Friday of each week.

The Deseret Weekly is magazine form is published every Saturday.

For articles changing their place of residence should always give former as well as present address.

The News is on sale at the principal News Stands and on all passenger trains leaving the city after 7 p. m. daily.

The Subscription price is: Daily, $9.00 per year, or $1.00 per month; Semi-Weekly, $4.00 per year; Weekly, $2.00 per year, payable in advance.

All communications should be addressed to

DESERET NEWS PUBLISHING CO.

Telephone 30.

RESERVOIRS AND DAMS.

In another part of the NEWS reference is made to a petition which is being circulated among residents near the mouth of Big Cottonwood canyon, Salt Lake county, asking that a certain company which has placed a dam in Big Cottonwood canyon and has constructed a reservoir to restrained from filling the reservoir by closing its dam. The reason for the request is stated to be that the dam is unsafe, having been declared so by a competent engineer; hence, as a matter of self-defense in life and property, the people are seeking protection are it is too late.

Whether or not the dam referred to is unsafe, we have no definite information at present, but hope to learn positively in the near future. But whether safe or not, the subject of the petition should receive official attention at once, so as to set at rest the minds of the people. If the work is safe it cannot be made known too soon, and the company interested ought to be first to make public explanation and demonstration of the fact. If there be any basis for even a suspicion that the dam is insufficient for the use to which it is to be put, then prompt measures should be taken to prevent such an attempted use. The matter is not one to admit of delay or play; life and property are at stake, and must not be left unprotected.

There is not the slightest excuse for any builder of a dam in the locality named to be satisfied short of its absolute security. It can be made as safe as the mountain wall itself, since material for the purpose is abundant and convenient. It is merely a question of a little more outlay of expense; and for the public good this question must be resolved in favor of public safety. The owner or builder may be willing to take the risk on a dam whose strength appears to be sufficient but is not within the range of absolute certainty; at most this risk is merely the cost of breaking. But the public cannot be put off with that. With them there is involved the imminent danger of a loss which cannot be made good. The bursting of a reservoir may not only destroy a vast amount of property, but may carry down to death many human beings; and all the money that can be saved by being niggardly in constructing a dam is not equivalent to the loss of one life, in the eyes of the public, whatever some over-economical dam-builder may think.

Again we say that we have no direct information that the work in question is unsafe. It may be as thoroughly secure as the most cautious can require, and we hope it is so. But the public attention called to it should serve to fix upon the minds of the present legislators that they should not go to their homes without having enacted a law on the subject of reservoirs and dams. If there be no other provision, the statute should order that every dam for a reservoir, or for raising water for a canal for irrigating or power purposes, and every work of that kind, should be constructed under State supervision, and to the satisfaction of the direct representatives of the people.

The members of the committee on irrigation and agriculture will remember that at a recent meeting where a number of prominent citizens gave their views on irrigation and kindred subjects, the veteran Israel Evans, of Utah county, related the circumstances of the bursting of a dam in American Fork canyon some years ago. The suggestion of State supervision for reservoirs and dams was then made, and seemed to receive the unqualified endorsement of the committee. Taken in connection with what was then said, this later incident should cause the suggestion to be speedily crystallized into a law on the subject. Let builders of dams and the public know at once what is required in such matters, and we have no doubt that all parties will be glad to comply with legal requirements that shall set at rest all doubts regarding the sufficiency of any work of the class mentioned.

FOR MORE RETRENCHMENT.

The present City Council has done much in the way of retrenchment; it has gladdened the hearts of the taxpayers to a very appreciable extent by reducing excessive salaries and abolishing many unnecessary offices. This extravagant official list was made up by councilmen who went into office with an avowed determination to make Salt Lake City a "metropolitan town" at whatever cost to the property owners. They therefore set to work and created innumerable departments, no doubt to be in the fashion with Chicago, New York and cities of that class. Most of these offices have remained in existence, to the great chagrin and discomfiture of the taxpayers, for a period of nearly six years. At last a change has come and the board of municipal managers recently elected had awakened to a realization of the fact that the city was nearing a state of bankruptcy, and that something must be done quickly. This something, or a long step in its direction, has been done, and the city has been relieved of an unnecessary annual expenditure of over $50,000 for salaries alone, and has been given promise of a further relief of more than double that amount by consolidation and retrenchment in various departments.

The question now is: Is it possible still further to reduce the expenses of the municipality without hindering its progress? The answer comes from many: "Yes, we believe so;" and of course in substantiation of such a reply it would not be amiss to point out wherein that further reduction could be made. It has been suggested, and properly, we think, that the office of sanitary inspector which gives to its incumbent a monthly emolument of $100 could well be dispensed with. The suggestion is also made that in the abolishing of that office, the work heretofore resting upon that official could very properly be given to the plumbing inspector.

In this suggestion we think there is something worth considering. During the month of January the plumbing inspector issued but twenty permits, a labor of about twenty hours, for which he received his monthly stipend of $100. Could he not also attend to the duties of sanitary inspector and thus be given work equivalent to his pay? It would seem so, and to the present writer the consideration of the feasibility of such a move may properly be suggested. If they see in it the merits of a just and equitable retrenchment, let them abolish the office of sanitary inspector; or, if that be regarded as necessary, let the man who looks after the plumbing business for less than an hour a day be dispensed with and the sanitary department take up his work.

This is but one notion of a number that might be given—the cutting of the mealess force in the treasurer's department, for instance. But it will do for a present suggestion, and to intimate to the city fathers that while the reduction made has been highly commendable, all that can be profitably done in this line has not yet been accomplished.

A NEW AIR SHIP.

No present subject of industrial and scientific discussion excites more interest in the public mind or possesses more charm for the investigator than the navigation of the upper deep—in other words, the construction of practical ships or other contrivances for flying above the earth's surface and traversing the air. The Maxim air-ship has been perhaps more prominently brought to attention than any other, and by reason of the fame of its inventor as well as the apparent correctness of the principles upon which its ideas are based, its project has been regarded with much less incredulity than is commonly associated with "flying machines" in the mind of the uninitiated. A new candidate, however, for public favor in this line has made its appearance, the Zeppelin air-ship, which seems to possess constructive merits above any other design yet presented. The St. Paul Pioneer Press describes it as having a cigar-shaped body which can be propelled, so it is claimed, upward and downward, forward or backward, to right or left, and which is capable of being safely used in any atmospheric conditions liable to occur within three and a half miles above the surface of the earth. It is so buoyant that it can be taken up 20,000 feet with but little trouble. Not more than 5,000 pounds in weight can be carried by each vessel as a load. Great economy, however, has been exercised in the arrangement for gas, and it is calculated that the ship may remain in the air for nearly a week at a time, without its being necessary to return to the surface for gas. The power is furnished by a benzene motor made of aluminum, or an alloy of that metal, and so nicely is the motive power calculated that there is very little waste in propulsion. The fact that a certain amount of buoyant gas is stored within the frame work of the machine constitutes a drawback in so far as it increases the dependence of the conductor of the ship on terrestrial supplies; if an air ship should be constructed which was sufficiently practical and serviceable to justify the establishment of a transit system, with supply stations at intervals, the use of hydrogen gas would not be a great disadvantage, but for a long series of experiments it would necessarily be so. The popular idea of an air ship is a machine in which long voyages may be made in new regions, and it should be thoroughly independent of any accessories excepting such mechanics even as might be supplied at any stage in a voyage, without resort to the starting point or to a special depot of supplies. Nevertheless, the Zeppelin, if all that is claimed for it is true, is the first successful self-propelling aerial machine completed. The mechanical device once successfully tested, it is not too much to hope that it will be possible to eliminate the balloon feature of its construction.

The close of the century ought to witness some successful solution of the problem of aerial navigation, which is no longer regarded as chimerical, but rather as an imminent probability.

AN EASTERN publication named Today is responsible for the statement that buying legislation is a familiar part of the science of railway management. It says that the legislative investigations in New York proved that the Erie road spent $1,000,000 in a single year, to influence legislation, and the New York Central $200,000. The corruption money spent by the railroads of the United States is estimated at $50,000,000 a year. It also says that it is a matter of common knowledge that the railroads practically own the legislatures of New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan and many other states; and that they do not always stop with the legislature, but in Pennsylvania have captured the courts. John D. Lawson, author of "Leading Cases Simplified," warns the student of railway law "not to pay much need to the decisions of the supreme court of Pennsylvania, at least during the past ten or fifteen years. The Pennsylvania railroad appears to run that tribunal with the same success that it does its own trains."

EMPEROR KOMMIS is reported to be developing traits of such an eccentric character as to give rise to serious doubts about her mental equilibrium. Thus she is lavishing the most extravagant care and attention upon a little hedgehog which she picked up in her wanderings about her English country place at Farnborough. The velvet and satin-lined basket in which its nest has been arranged is of silver gilt, studded with jewels, while every day the widowed empress changes the dainty ribbon with which it is adorned. She talks to the little animal by the hour and insists on taking it about everywhere with her in her walks, her drives, and even at table, while at night it sleeps on a little console beside her bed. And yet some people who lavish as much care and attention on a pug dog are not regarded as in danger of losing their reasoning faculties.

THE UPPER house of legislative bodies is coming in for its share of criticism these days. There is the British house of lords, the French senate, the United States senate, and now there are unkind remarks about some of the bright particular stars of the less numerous branch of the Utah Legislature.

THERE is a very general impression that this man Corbett who talks so much about his championship, could not be pulled within range of this other slugger, Fitzsimmons, with a log-chain and a team of mules.

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Two Lives Saved.

Mrs. Phoebe Thomas, of Junction City, Ill., was told by her doctors she had Consumption and that there was no hope for her, but two bottles of Dr. King's New Discovery completely cured her and she says it saved her life. Mr. Thos. Eggers, 130 Florida St., San Francisco, suffered from a dreadful cold, approaching Consumption, tried without result everything else, then bought one bottle of Dr. King's New Discovery and in two weeks was cured. He is naturally thankful. It is such results, of which these are samples, that prove the wonderful efficacy of this medicine in Coughs and Colds. Free trial bottles at Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

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MR. JAMES O'NEILL

Supported by a Company of Artists in Four Magnificent Production Creations:

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Mr. O'Neill's second appearance in that character.

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For the first time here in 3 years.

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First presentation in Salt Lake City of this play.

Special scenery for each play. Carriages may be ordered at 10:45 p. m. for all performances. Sale of seats begins Friday, Feb. 21.

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A NICE 8 ROOM BRICK ON NINTH East; a modern 8 room brick on East Drive, and seven houses on Fifth South, near main. All these properties have every convenience and are in splendid condition. They can be had for less than half their value and on easy terms. Make me an offer for them. CHAS. E. MOORE, Room 15 O'Brien Block.

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