

upon a bias in matters of religious faith as contemptible as it is baseless on the part of government representatives.

The circumstances of the case are, briefly, that the boy, aged 11 years, and the girl, 8 years old, both children of English parents, were sent to Utah in the care of two returning missionaries, the parents with the rest of their families intending to follow as soon as circumstances would permit. Arrangements were made to have the children well provided for in the matter of the comforts of life and education in American schools, until their parents should be able again to take personal control. Thus the provisions of the immigration law were fully complied with. But the officials detained the children on the ground that they were liable to become "a public charge," the basis of such claim being the supposition that they were "to be taken to Salt Lake and there educated in the Mormon faith."

Now it may be a new idea to some people that an education "in the Mormon faith" is liable to cause children or grown people either to become public charges. The prevailing opinion based upon an unbroken array of facts, is that the contrary effect is produced. If there is one material feature more than another which being trained "in the Mormon faith" develops, it is the tendency to make the people self-supporting; and the better the Mormon the farther removed is he from any liability of becoming a charge on the government for his care and sustenance. Knowing this to be the case, the only conclusion to be arrived at is that the officials referred to are seeking to exclude people from this country solely on religious grounds—a proceeding so bigoted, unlawful and un-American that every officer who persists in engaging in it should be relegated to political oblivion as unfit to be trusted with the administration of public affairs.

That in this view of the case the officers referred to are not being subjected to unfriendly criticism, but in fact are leniently dealt with, is shown by the official statement of Immigration Inspector Geffeney himself, who asserts that the children "are en route to Salt Lake City, there to be educated in the Mormon faith. The American minister at Samoa wrote to the state department regarding the matter, and measures were taken immediately to suppress the work. The Mormons have established their colonies all through the island groups, from Samoa to New Zealand, and they are trying to get the children to Salt Lake to make good Mormons of them. A party of missionaries came up on the Mariposa, but we could not prevent them from landing, as they were all citizens of the United States. I reported the case to Commissioner Stradley, and he endorsed my action. The case will now go before the special board of inquiry, the action of which will be final."

From this may be understood the animus which prompted the official proceeding in this case. It is to be hoped, however, that in the future the gentlemen concerned will exhibit more of the genius of American justice and liberality than they have shown in this proceeding. In contrast with their former course they have for

example the commendably prompt and lawful action of United States District Attorney Garter, Deputy Surveyor of Port S. J. Ruddell, W. W. Presbery of the Chinese bureau, and G. Channing, of the special agents' department, who constituted the special board of inquiry which reviewed the case and ordered that the children be set at liberty to pursue their journey to this Territory.

OUR FORESTS.

George Arbogast, Esq., who has charge of an extensive vineyard and farm at Bountiful, addresses the following communication to the News:

Will you kindly inform me if there is any way to save our young forests of maple and other trees? Wagon loads of lovely young trees are being hauled past my door every day by the farmers who live in the bottoms. They are being cut from the water sheds that supply our canyons and springs with water in the summer. All the large trees were cut years ago and it seems a great pity to see large tracts denuded of these young trees that must have taken at least ten to twelve years to grow.

Do these farmers realize what they are doing? I know how long it takes to get maple and other trees to attain any size as I have planted 50,000 on my timber culture entry up here, and when our arid region requires so much water what will the future be if this destruction continues?

I sympathize with the farmers these hard times when they need winter wood, but will they not be paying very dearly for it in the near future?

We do not want to go through the danger of freshets in the spring. When the sun has a full sweep on the winter's snow, instead of the water coming down gradually because of the snow being shaded by the trees, it goes off at once and does not have a chance to gradually sink into the ground and keep alive our creeks and springs. I feel sure it would pay the county or Territory to take care of these trees and if necessary supply the needy farmers with fuel free rather than to have our water supply which is our land's life endangered.

I wish I had the time and means to go on a mission among these farmers and have them realize the value of each tree destroyed. I think with the large areas of oak brush that can be had for the digging out, plenty of cheap fuel could be obtained for years, only it takes a little harder work. I hope that I will not make enemies of my neighbors by my ideas on this matter and trust you may think it worthy of mention and that you may suggest a remedy.

Mr. Arbogast's letter relates to a great evil, but in our opinion there is no legal remedy for it, under a territorial form of government, though the powers of our Legislature in the premises have been a subject of debate. The title to the lands on which our mountain forests grow is vested in the United States, and the laws of Congress permit timber to be removed from such lands for fuel, etc. On the ground that the preservation of the timber in certain places is necessary for the protection of property, it is possible that the police powers of the Territorial government might have been invoked with beneficial effect. But this is a legal question concerning which there is much doubt, pro and con, and we know of no authority that could be referred to, which would determine it.

A similar condition will exist under

the government of our new state, except as to the lands granted thereto. Lands granted to the new state, under the provisions of congressional laws, will of course be under its control, including the timber growing thereon, but such lands will have to be designated before such control can be assumed. In a word, the lands owned by the United States, and the timber growing thereon, are subject to the exclusive control of Congress, barring such police powers as the present territorial, or our state government, may rightfully exercise over them. Just what those police powers are, or if they exist at all, is a matter that has not, to our knowledge, been definitely stated or determined.

The agitation of this subject, however, can scarcely fail to be beneficial, and it seems probable that, if proper steps shall be taken, authority may be obtained from Congress empowering the state legislature to enact needful laws for the preservation of the timber in our mountains, to the end that the interests of irrigation may be thereby protected and promoted. The matter is an important one, and will call for action on the part of the first legislature of the State of Utah.

OUR MILITIA.

The military exercises at Fort Douglas Wednesday 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 new 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 recruits on the splendid showing they made yesterday, and on the remarkable rapidity with which they are acquiring proficiency in the art of war.

SAYS THE DENVER NEWS of the 25th instant: "The DESERET NEWS of Salt Lake was 27 years old on Wednesday last. Its weekly issue, however, was begun about 1850, making it the oldest weekly in the Transmissouri region. The oldest daily is the Rocky Mountain News, whose daily issue was begun in 1861, the weekly having been established April 23, 1859."