

potato, most certainly can claim nothing. Perhaps it decided to rest on its laurels a season or two, or through sheer exhaustion from successive and easy previous triumphs has decided to go into voluntary retirement to give the others a chance. Or perhaps—we make this suggestion in fear and with hesitation—its hard-headed and clear-headed growers have come too nearly to the condition of a flock of sheep—blindly following the leader, whereby when one farmer plants potatoes all do likewise, and when the over production thus created proves unmarketable, every one flies to the other extreme and plants none at all.

The fame of the Utah tuber has been so great that the news of a material shortage in the local crop is a real disappointment. The conditions under which our potatoes met and vanquished all competitors have not changed for the worse since that proud moment. The sad truth that we have in a large degree lost the supremacy as to quality, and are even away behind in quantity, admits, therefore, of but one explanation: our farmers have become careless in cultivation, negligent in the study of markets, and inaccurate in estimating needs, acreage, certainty and locality of demand, and probable source of supply.

Perhaps the following figures may furnish a text for some hard thinking on the part of our agriculturists. Taking the estimate of the department of agriculture of the yield on a basis of 100 bushels to the acre for a full crop for the entire country, we find that Utah this year produces only 88 bushels, or only a little more than the average for the whole Union. Our neighbors have beaten us in this, our own favored crop, almost out of sight. Montana shows up with 138 bushels per acre; Wyoming with 134; Nevada with 132; even Colorado with 94; while Idaho is the banner state of the Union with 153. We do manage to beat Arizona, which yields 75, and are equal to some of the Southern states, while Kansas and Nebraska trail along in the remotest rear, each with 44 bushels per acre.

The department declares that the acreage last season was fully equal to former years, which is probably not true so far as Utah is concerned; and it attributes the shortage to dry weather during the late summer and early fall, which in our case is no excuse at all, since there has been no particular lack of irrigating water, which makes us independent of drouth.

Confronted with a general deficit of 20 bushels less to the acre than the country produced in the excellent season of 1891, the potato eater this winter will turn his hungry eyes towards Scotland, Ireland and Germany. From the former country, where the crop has been extremely good, large shipments have already begun; and New York importers assert that in order to supply the demand, the importations will continue until the middle of June, when the new crop from the South will begin to come to. It is not likely that in this far-distant Territory we shall be forced to humiliate our tables with foreign "mealies," but it will be neither inappropriate nor unprofitable if the farmer folk among us, every time they stick a fork into a steaming specimen, shall reflect on the discreditable

showing the Territory has made in this one line, and how regular, and active, and lucrative an export trade we might build up by attending strictly to business as in the olden time.

THE MORMONS AS CITY-BUILDERS.

A few days ago the *News* published a paragraph from the *Nauvoo Rustler* expressing the opinion that if the Mormons had not been driven out, that city would have been the metropolis of the state, and lamenting the "sad, sad, mistake" made by the citizens of Hancock county in the expulsion of these thrifty city-builders. Further comments of similar tenor have been excited in other newspapers of that region, and in all that up to the present time have come under observation, it is gratifying to note a tribute to the honesty, diligence, sobriety and general good citizenship of a people whose name a short generation ago was in these same regions uttered by antagonists only in connection with a curse or a reproach. It is another illustration that justice though sometimes delayed cannot forever be defeated, and that truth, though seemingly crushed to earth, will rise again.

We quote today from the *Quincy Journal* with reference to the *Rustler's* confession above mentioned:

This is the first time that the writer has ever heard or known of a Nauvooite saying straight out that the people of Hancock county made a great mistake when they drove the Mormons out, but we have long inclined to the belief that they did indeed make a mistake, a sad, sad mistake when by their acts they drove Salt Lake City out of Hancock county, Ill., into far off Utah. It is plain to us that the beautiful Salt Lake City itself is not today the equal of the city that Nauvoo would have been had the early Mormons not been made the scapegoat of every offense that was committed in this section of the country, and driven from the state. * * * The site of the city of Nauvoo, as the location of a great city, is certainly the best we know of anywhere between St. Louis and St. Paul. The Mormons were and today are a thrifty and enterprising people, looked at from a material standpoint. Salt Lake City is their boast and pride, as Nauvoo would have been had they been allowed to remain there. Nauvoo is far enough away from St. Louis to have grown up into a metropolis, which, like Salt Lake City of today, would have been the pleasant home of thousands of non-Mormons. Salt Lake City is not a bad place to live, far from it. The Mormons of that city make excellent neighbors and fellow citizens. It would have been the same if the founders of Salt Lake City had been permitted to remain at Nauvoo, Hancock county, Illinois.

ELECTRICITY AND IRON.

The multifarious uses to which electricity is being put are continually being added to. One of the most recent processes in electrical science is that of melting iron. When the welding of iron by this means was successfully accomplished it was but another step to reduce the solid metal to a liquid state by the same agency, and a plan to carry this idea into effect has been discovered by a Milwaukee man named Solomon Shaw. He says that

the use of electricity for melting iron is only a question of obtaining a sufficient current for practical purposes without an undue waste of energy, and this problem he claims to have solved.

The usual construction of the cupola is employed except that it is made to taper gradually from the charging door in the shape of an inverted cone to within eighteen inches of the bottom, when it opens out into a receiving chamber for the fluid metal. At the bottom of the conical opening on each side of the apparatus are two or more electrodes of carbon, in such relative arrangement as to produce a voltaic arc when energized by a current of electricity. The electrodes are fixed upon rack bars, which, by an automatic arrangement of pulleys and strap, is actuated by a weight controlled by the electric current. As the electrodes are consumed and the distance increases to such a degree that there is danger of the current falling to cross, the racks are automatically forced together so as to keep a constant current. The iron to be melted is stacked in the main chamber of the furnace. An electric current of sufficient power being let in to the electrodes, the lower portion of the metal is reduced to a fluid state and passes down to the receiving chamber to be drawn off through the tap opening. This process is continued till all the iron is down.

If melting iron in a furnace by means of electricity can be accomplished with as much saving over the use of coke as Shaw claims for his method, it is only a short and comparatively easy step to smelting the ore by the same means. So soon as this end is attained the vast mountains of iron ore in Southern Utah as well as the immense bodies in Morgan, Weber and Box Elder counties can be reduced without the outlay of a million or more of dollars which would be necessary under the present method of smelting. It would be indeed a good thing for this Territory if its iron could be reduced to marketable form at such low cost as to compete with the prices now paid for ordinary pig iron. In this time of rapid development of scientific and mechanical knowledge, the time may not be far distant for the opening up of what will yet prove to be one of the greatest industries of the West—successful iron works in Utah.

WINTER WORK FOR FARMERS.

One would think it unnecessary to remind farmers that of the four seasons of the year the spring is the busiest of all; yet such a reminder is needed, even among Utah farmers, noted as they are for their industrious and persevering habits. One reason for the necessity of this hint is also a leading reason for the spring being a season of so much work. That is, that so many things which should be done in the fall and winter, and which could just as well be attended to while the snow is on the ground, or before the icy grip of winter has taken hold or when it has temporarily relaxed, are postponed until the winter is permanently broken, and the planting and growing season is at hand. Many a professed farmer leaves the cleaning up of his corral till