EDUCATIONAL MATTERS.

Central Seminary, Salt Lake Stake—Erection of Buildings.—History of the Institution.—Its Progress, Scope and Aims.—Visits to City Schools: Utah University, Latter-day Saints' College and Salt Lake Business College.

The Central Seminary of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion is situated between Fifteenth and Sixteenth South and Ninth and Tenth (East streets, and a mile east of the State road. The district maintaining it comprises Mill Creek, East Mill Creek, Big Cottonwood, South Cottonwood, Union and Granite wards, which include a large portion of the southeast part of the county.

The school was established in the autumn of 1890 and is consequently about the middle of its fourth academic year. During the first year school was held in a building situated in Big Cottonwood, but this was found inadequate to the needs of the seminary, and at the end of the year the school board was confronted by the question as to whether they should rent a larger building or erect one.

As no building of suitable size and arrangement could be found in a central location, and a beautiful site of ten acres was offered by the estate of the late Thomas Home, on condition that a suitable edifice should be erected thereon within a reasonable length of time, the board, after mature deliberation, decided to accept the generous offer and erect a building forthwith.

Accordingly the ground was broken July 8, 1891, with appropriate ceremonies, and the construction was immediately begun under the supervision of James R. Miller, treasurer of the board. Within eighty-four working days from that date the large and commodious seminary building now used was pronounced complete, which speaks well for the energy and attention of the supervisor. Besides completing the building, roads to it had been opened and graveled, a fine flowing well [illegible], and the premises enclosed by a neat and substantial combination fence, all the generous gift of Miller Brothers.

Dedicatory services were held October 12th, Elder Joseph E. Taylor, of the Salt Lake Stake presidency, offering the dedicatory prayer. Much excellent instruction was given by Elder Taylor and others, and in the evening a sociable party was given in the building. The second academic year was thus joyously ushered in.

As cold weather came on, it was found that stabling would be needed for horses that brought students from a distance, and accordingly the board bought the lumber and got workmen to erect an elegant stable large enough to accommodate sixty horses. While this work was in progress the principal dismissed school one or two days that the students, who took hold with a will, might assist in nailing on the siding and shingling the roof. As spring approached another well was driven and some 500 shade and ornamental trees were set out on the extensive grounds. These, with a few years more of growth, will render most pleasant and beautiful this well chosen school site.

The school building, which now faces the setting sun, is 66 by 40 feet, is two stories high, and it forms only the west wing of the original plan, which consists of a large central part and a corresponding east wing, the whole to face south. The lower story of the wing already up contains a large study room, one recitation room, the principal's office and a large hall, while the upper floor is divided into two equal rooms by a partition with sliding doors, which admit of the throwing of the two rooms into one. Besides these there is also a large hall upstairs with hooks, etc., for the students' hats and wraps. The building is lighted by forty-six large windows and heated by steam. The cost of the improvements described above is about $10,000, divided pro rata among the six wards comprising the seminary district.

The school rooms are furnished with new automatic desks and [illegible] recitation seats and the few articles of apparatus provided are of the newest and best of the kind; though the financial condition of the board has been such that little has been expended as yet in apparatus.

The school, which has an enrollment of over one hundred, was never in better condition than it is at the present time. The attendance is regular. The work done and the interest taken by the students are very satisfactory. There are but two departments, the intermediate and academic, the lowest grade received being fourth-reader pupils. Special effort is being made to drill the students thoroughly in the common branches, but this year a number are in attendance who have completed all or nearly all the studies belonging to the intermediate grade and are pursuing some of the more advanced branches. These are in the academic department, though perhaps not yet up to the required standard to be so classified. Still their work is very good, and a number whose circumstances will not admit of their leaving home to attend higher schools, are thus getting an insight into branches not taught in the district schools of the locality. The branches taught and the text books used in the intermediate department are the same as those of similar grades in the public schools, and from present indications there will be quite a large number who will complete the studies of the eighth grade this year and be qualified to enter the academic department next year.

A great obstacle that the teachers have to encounter is the poor attendance during the fall and spring terms. Being in a farming district, the young folk are needed to work in the fall until the crops are gathered, and they quit school in the spring when the conditions become favorable for plowing and other farm work. This is alike a great detriment to the school and to the pupils, as the courses begun are not finished and have to be [illegible] again the next year. This condition is beginning to be realized and indications are that more pupils than heretofore will attend till the year closes.

The distinguishing feature of the seminary, in connection with other Church schools, is the course in theology. It may be of interest to some of the readers of the News to have a more detailed account of the training given to students of the seminary in this branch of learning. If the adult Latter-day Saints generally would visit the Church schools more and witness the theological work done by their children, their interest in these schools would be greatly increased, and they would be better appreciated and patronized.

The seminary has a well organized choir, David Frame acting as conductor, and Miss [illegible] as organist, with Miss [illegible] Sutherland as assistant. Each day's work is begun and finished with appropriate devotional exercises—singing and prayer—performed almost wholly by the students, and many a young man has been induced to call upon his Maker in these exercises who has never before prayed. The Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Compendium are regularly and systematically used as text books, and the principles of the Gospel are explained and proved in daily class recitations. Besides this, regular lectures are given by the teachers on subjects not treated in text books, but necessary to proper education.

General theology meetings are held and presided over by students in turn. On being called to preside the student takes the chair, directs the devotional exercises, the reading of the minutes, etc., and then calls upon his fellow students to render a previously prepared program, which includes the asking and answering of questions on theological subjects, reading essays, etc., the extra time being filled in by extemporaneous addresses by the students. This procedure is designed to give the students practical drill in presiding. Although the teachers take no leading part in these meetings they are present to see that proper answers are given to questions, and to render the presiding student any aid needed.

On fast days regular fast meetings are held and the time is occupied by volunteer speakers from among the pupils. This feature alone as witnessed this year is, the seminary would repay a visit to the school. Besides these exercises, an evening meeting is held bi-weekly, attended by not only the students but by many of their parents and friends. The exercises of the meetings are of a more varied nature than are those of the others, consisting of songs, recitations, readings, lectures, etc., the teachers often taking part. Thus the students are not only taught the various branches of education but are afforded every opportunity of putting to actual use what they learn, and of getting a practice of inestimable value to them.

The rules that all agree to observe at all times while they are members of the school prohibit the use of tobacco, strong drink, bad language and all unbecoming conduct.

The appointment of students to positions of responsibility as monitors, seniors, reporters, etc., cultivates within them public-spiritedness—a very important quality.

One marked effect of the organization and discipline of the school is the love and harmony that prevail among the students and their teachers. The feeling last mentioned was manifested in a most pleasing manner at the recent holiday vacation. On closing school before the holidays the students made each of the teachers (who, by the way, are serving this year as missionaries without the usual salary, thus making tuition free) a handsome present; and on the first day of school after the holidays they were presented with a number of five dollar gold pieces, as perhaps a more needed and substantial testimonial of the good-will of pupils toward their teachers. It may be unnecessary to say that the teachers were as surprised as pleased and felt that their labors and sacrifices were not in vain. Their true reward, however, was one that money could not buy.

Altogether the seminary is doing a good work. Its growth has been steady though not very rapid; and despite the financial pressure under which it now suffers, and the seeming burden it has been upon the people, it has made friends not a few; and it is the sincere hope and determination of its promoters that it shall continue to grow; that its future will be brighter than its present or its past.

Visits to City Schools.

The various city schools have been visited with a view to ascertaining the practical workings in the various grades, and the results of the observations are as follows:

FIRST GRADE.

At the time of the visit to one of the schools there was in progress an exercise in reading. A number of words that occurred in the lesson were placed upon the board, and their meaning given; attention was also called to phonetic characters occurring therein. At a given signal, the class arose and [illegible] a few moments in a breathing exercise. Again seated, pupils were called upon to read. The aim was apparently to require each child to get the thought expressed, and to enunciate clearly and distinctly. The attention [illegible] consists in a more humdrum calling of words, without any [illegible], whatever. Upon the board in this instance were designs, neatly drawn by the teacher, and which added much to the appearance of the room. The teacher was an enthusiast in her work. The order was fair.

FIFTH GRADE.

In this grade in one school a recitation in mental arithmetic was going on. Problem: Two-thirds of a bushel of wheat costs fifty cents; find the cost of five bushels. Mary, to [illegible] the example: Since two-thirds of a bushel of wheat costs fifty cents, one-third of a bushel will cost one-half of fifty cents, or twenty-five cents, [illegible], one bushel [illegible] seventy-five cents. Since one bushel of wheat costs seventy-five cents, five bushels of wheat will cost five times seventy-five cents, or $3.75. The analysis was given promptly, the entire class being on the alert to detect any errors that might occur. [illegible] examples were then given, [illegible] the fundamental rules and were to [illegible] [illegible]. Nearly all the pupils completed them within the designated time. Papers were exchanged, examined, and a pupil called upon to give the results, which, when given, were posted upon the board.

Following this, was an exercise in physical culture. Every command [illegible]. The exercises of the [illegible] as though given by one pupil. [illegible] varied in their character, followed by quick movements, [illegible] approval of the director of physical culture, who [illegible] while the exercises were being given, who [illegible] that the work [illegible] in a satisfactory degree the system as taught in the schools. The personality of this teacher, and the effects upon the school [illegible] be told. The work speaks for itself. The order was excellent.

EIGHTH GRADE.

In the eighth grade of another school a class in grammar was being conducted. The lesson for that day was devoted to the analysis of some quite intricate sentences, the pupils displaying considerable familiarity with [illegible], and replying promptly to test questions. The separation of sentences into their principal and subordinate parts and the various classes of [illegible] formed oral analysis, and the same work was placed upon the board in the form of diagrams. Following was an exercise in physical culture under the direction of the teacher of the room. The necessary commands were given with sharpness and vigor, but the pupils did not enter into the exercise with the spirit manifested by the teacher who appeared dignified, capable and self-possessed, and who maintained with apparent ease, good order. As an instructor and disciplinarian, she is undoubtedly a success, and were there a more natural relationship existing between teacher and pupils, the power of the former would be largely increased.

UTAH UNIVERSITY.

In a visit to this institution the class in algebra was observed. It was dealing with equations containing two unknown quantities. Wells' text-book was in use, although additional problems were assigned from other authors, the instructor adopting this plan throughout the work. At a given signal, the entire class were sent to the board, and given problems for solution. When a student had completed his example and demonstrated the same, he was at once given another, thus keeping everyone busy. Each was held strictly to account for his method of demonstration, and to which the attention of the entire class was directed, especially if the problem was complex. The [illegible], equation and the [illegible]—essentials to every algebraic problem, and axioms applying to demonstrations were brought out with precision. One was impressed with the idea that thorough preparation was a requisite for continued membership in the class. The instructor has a strong predilection for mathematics and is an efficient teacher. The students were interested; the order very good.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS' COLLEGE.

The hour for recitation had partially expired when the building was reached, consequently only a brief report can be given. The subject treated was methods in teaching—the text-book used being Baldwin's elementary work. The lesson assigned brought out an interesting discussion, in which a large number of students participated. Points not clearly understood were explained by the teacher, who in his desire to have the discussion take a wide range, presented conclusions that might have been reached by further investigation on the part of the students themselves. The teacher was dignified and enthusiastic; [illegible] attentive and interested. The order was good.

SALT LAKE BUSINESS COLLEGE.

In this institution the commercial room presented an animated scene. Imaginary commission houses, dry goods merchants, grocers, bankers, hardware dealers, buying and selling, were as interested as though the transactions were those of every day life. One "merchant"—became overstocked, times became stringent, and as he could not raise the necessary wherewithal, he was "closed out." In addition to commercial studies, a department is conducted, in which some of the common school branches are taught. The Ellis system, now quite favorably known, is taught, and with satisfactory results. The number of students now enrolled is one hundred and thirty. When, as in this institution, the business college of to-day becomes a veritable business house, it will more nearly accomplish its mission.

NOTES.

The A class, second grade, Lowell school, Mrs. [illegible], teacher, made the following excellent record last week:

	Belonging.	Present.	Tardy.
Monday,	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tuesday,	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Wednesday,	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Thursday,	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Friday,	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

What school can excel this record?

Coalville Chronicle: It has not yet been decided where this county will hold its summer institute, in all probability we will join with Salt Lake county. This is the nearest and consequently the most convenient for our teachers. However, it will depend upon future developments. If Salt Lake county will work up a good summer school, we may join them. If not, we will go elsewhere.

Richfield Advocate: Mr. Jacob Lauritzen, of the district school, informed me last week that there were [illegible] children in Richfield of the school age, of the number 422 attended the district school, the remainder are in attendance at the Methodist and Presbyterian mission schools and the Latter-day Saints academy. A very small number are out of school on account of sickness or other unavoidable causes. The district school teachers are proud of their comfortable quarters and the facilities they have for teaching. Richfield must be congratulated on her fine and imposing structure.

The managers of the Territorial fair, to be held next fall at Salt Lake City, have written to some of the county superintendents, urging them to make every effort to have a good exhibit of school work at the fair, says the [illegible] County Chronicle. Superintendent McBride of [illegible] county [illegible] all teachers in his county to have the work of the present year saved for the purpose of making an exhibit, and he will probably [illegible] each teacher [illegible] [illegible]. Compositions, maps, drawings, [illegible] of penmanship, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. All that is needed is the effort. This must come from the teachers.

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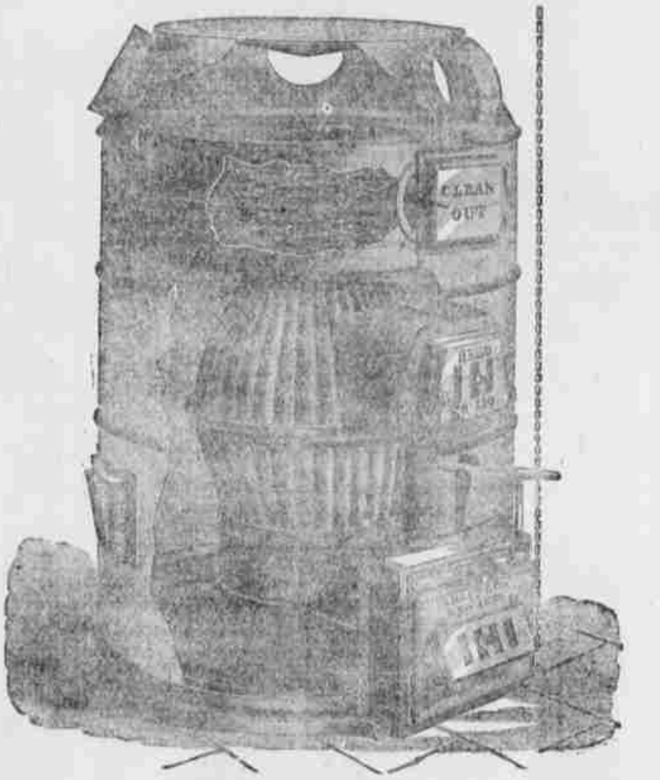

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