

Correspondence.

The Schools of Provo, Springville Spanish Fork, POND TOWN, Payson, and Santaquin.

SANTAQUIN, Utah County,
Feb. 27, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

Our visit to the schools of Provo was accompanied with considerable disappointment. Provo being the county seat of Utah County, under the direct influence of the County Supt., W. H. Dusenberry, and the Branch University, we expected to find the schools of that city in a much more prosperous condition than other places less favored. Provo is divided into four wards, each of which is a school district. There are three trustees to each district. The responsibility thus resting upon each board of trustees being so small, they have apparently shaken off all responsibility and the schools are left severely alone. There are about 1,000 children of legal school age in Provo, and but 135 pupils are enrolled in the public schools. This number, added to 221 students that are attending the Timpanogos Branch of the University, gives a total enrolment of 356. This very small enrolment was not surprising when we ascertained a knowledge of the schools, school-houses and appliances. When we entered the 3rd Ward School-house we were forcibly reminded of Kit Burns' rat pit. It is an octagonal concern, with nests all around the walls. Their furniture, school appliances, and the methods of teaching in some of their schools might have been approved twenty years ago, but not in this age of progress. I was very glad to learn that the County Court and City Council are about to change the four districts, as they now exist, into one school district, and thus place the whole city under one set of efficient trustees. If they will do this, and consent to throw away the name "University," which is simply a fraud as applied to their high school, and establish the graded system, have the primary classes taught in the Ward school-houses, and the intermediate, grammar, and academic departments taught in the University building, much good might be accomplished and no additional expense.

The City of Springville is also divided into four wards, with a school in each ward, but they are all included in one school district, under one set of trustees. Their school houses are much better fitted up with desks and charts, but they have no maps nor globes, nor other school appliances which are necessary to make their schools interesting. We soon learned that the classes in these schools were not worried with close criticism nor excessive drill, but they were left severely alone. The office of a true teacher did not crop out very prominently in any of the public schools there. The Springville high school taught by Mr. Charles D. Evans, is a success. Mr. Evans is a teacher of considerable experience, which, in connection with his scholastic attainments and natural qualifications, shows itself in his masterly way of conducting the school.

The city of Spanish Fork is divided into two school districts, each of which contains a small but comfortable school-house. These houses are well filled with pupils, who appear to be much interested in their work; they are not instructed in accordance with the most approved methods, still they are accomplishing much good. The select school, taught by Mr. Geo. H. Brimhall, is in fine condition. The house in which he teaches was built by the enterprising young men of Spanish Fork for literary purposes, which is very much to their credit. It is comfortably furnished with home-made desks to accommodate about fifty students, every seat being filled with appreciative students, who are advanced in the common branches of education, and who fully realize the advantages they have of being instructed by a teacher of superior ability.

The Pond Town school is a sham bug. If a person would be justified in judging from appearances, he would decide that the school-house and furniture must have been placed there about the year one, and very poor care had been taken of them. All the school appliances that were in the school were furnished by the teacher. The trustees are in a state of profound leth-

argy, and the school is almost helplessly in the same fix. We were anxious to get away from this town as soon as possible, but we soon found ourselves in the bottom of one of the ponds after which the town was named. After a considerable effort we extricated ourselves, and mustering up a new force of courage and determination, we plunged into what looked like the old road to Payson, but we very soon found that the bottom had fallen out, and we were compelled to take the new road which we found perpendicularly below the old one.

After considerable tribulation we arrived at the city of Payson, which is all in one school district under one set of efficient trustees, who are wide awake in the educational interests of that city. They have four good school-houses, well furnished, and well filled with bright children. Mr. Charles W. Wright, of the 4th Ward, is a teacher of considerable ability and experience, which plainly showed when we examined his classes.

The Payson high school is taught in the city hall, which is beautifully fitted up for school purposes, seated with the "Triumph Desks," forty in number, so that it will seat eighty students. It is one of the best school-rooms in the Territory, and the school will be doubtless one of the leading schools if properly conducted, for the material is there. Mr. J. L. Townsend, who has been engaged there as teacher for some time, is doing a good work, but he would do a much better work if he would pay more attention to discipline and have less self-perpetual motion.

Santaquin has but one school, which is well attended. The teacher is rather antiquated in his way of teaching, but he is doing pretty well considering the circumstances.

W. H. Dusenberry, superintendent of common schools for Utah county, visited the schools of that county with us. He is alive to the educational interests of his county, and is determined to do all that lies within his power to elevate the standard of her common schools. Utah county is suffering very much in consequence of the lack of qualified teachers, and the general query is, "Why do we not have a normal school?"

Yours truly,
O. H. RIGGS,
Territorial Superintendent of
Common Schools.

[Perhaps better late than never, but our readers would have been better pleased if the mail had brought us this correspondence in one or two days instead of nearly a month.—Ed. News.]

Smut in Wheat.

NEPHI CITY,
March 19th, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

Winter, our faithful friend, still lingers around us and seems unwilling to give way to its successor. Spring appears timid, and, annoyed at the long stay of the stern and cold monarch, modestly refuses to contest for her ground. But, as the season for farming is approaching, I would beg of the intelligent farmers to pardon me, if, with your kind permission, I advance through your columns a few ideas upon a subject concerning their future benefit.

Our farmers complain of the presence of smut in their wheat fields, and, as many devices have been proposed for the prevention of this evil, it may not be considered out of place to suggest another experiment. Scientific discoveries have demonstrated beyond doubt that smut is produced from the seed that is sown and not from the influences of the elements that regulate its growth, nor the time of sowing. For years the American farmer has imported (at a high price) a foreign wheat said to be free of smut the first year. It does not prove so any longer after being sown on our soil subsequently, but becomes no better than that of our own raising. This imported seed wheat is thrashed by the hands of the poor peasants of Russia (not by machine) and when closely examined is found to be perfectly sound, none of the grains having been broken, cracked or injured, as is that which has passed through the machines.

It may be argued that good and healthy seed wheat may accidentally produce unhealthy plants, but

in no case can diseased or impotent seed produce healthy wheat.

The grain that has been cracked or partially damaged (although invisibly to the eye) may germinate in the earth and attain to a certain growth at which it should form itself into grains or heads of wheat, but instead of which it proves an abortion, not being capable of attaining to a complete state of maturity, hence smut, which is the result of this abortion, and the consequence of imperfect seed.

The farmer has noticed that self-sown, or what is commonly called "volunteer wheat" is free of smut, this rather favors my theory, for this wheat has not passed through the breaking up process of the thrashing machine, or that of tramping out, therefore is sound and uninjured and produces no smut, except, however, what few grains have been damaged by wagon wheels when clearing up the crop.

Winter wheat is less liable to smut than spring wheat. From this I conclude that the imperfect and sickly wheat that would have produced the smut has been killed, being weaker and unable to stand the winter, whereas healthy germs survive and ripen. It is a good preventive to wash seed wheat in a solution made of blue vitriol or strong brine, and the sound and perfect grains of wheat will sustain no injury thereby, while the broken and cracked grains will be so affected that their vitality or germ will be destroyed, hence they cannot germinate.

Smut is not contagious. Keep your seed wheat healthy and sound, and I will insure your grain free of smut. Try the experiment, it costs but little. Thrash a few quarts of your best wheat by hand (not your whole crop) and sow it at the same time and on the same land as that thrashed by machine, then wait and watch the result.

CAMERA.

Travelling Through Utah, Juab, Millard, Beaver and Iron Counties—Barometrical Observations—Farming—Fish Farming—Home Products—"Don't"—Ardine Fashion—A Heavy Passenger—Lost the Track—Intense Cold—Irrigation Reservoirs—Coal Beds—Big Gold Discoveries—Great Western Iron Works—Rim of the Basin.

KANNAH, March 10, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

The enterprising men that inaugurated and built the Utah Southern railroad, seventy-five miles south of Salt Lake City, have conferred a lasting boon on the travelling public, as some thirty miles of deep mud have been successfully bridged over, and the danger of detention from such a cause made impossible.

The "beautiful" was falling gently as we left the metropolis, and the surrounding country was hid from sight. I got the impression that some of our farms were getting run out, growing poorer, and came to the conclusion that a higher system of cultivation must be adopted. The limit of paying productiveness is almost reached. Nature requires that land as well as man must be fed. Our farmers must plow deeper, manure heavier, especially with brains, to make farming a success.

I would respectfully suggest that some enterprising person start a fish farm near the Point of the Mountain. All such ventures pay in other localities. On the Truckee River I visited two such farms. They seemed to pay well. In the first place you had to pay to visit them, and if you wanted to fish from any of the ponds they charged you 50 cents each fish you caught, rather dear fishing, but a paying enterprise to the proprietor. Then there is the regular market, and that is rarely glutted with the king of fishes, trout.

Being provided with a barometer, I found the dugway at Point of the Mountain 4,900 feet above sea level, Lehi 4,700 feet. I cannot vouch for the absolute correctness of the measurement, as a storm was prevailing. American Fork and Pleasant Grove 4,750 feet, Provo 4,725 feet, Spanish Fork 4,700 feet, Payson 4,750 feet.

Utah Lake may be justly called the Queen of our Utah Lakes, settle like a diamond in a fringe of snow-clad mountains, whose summits pierce the air to the height of from 9,000 to 12,500 feet. Towering above them all stands Mount Nebo,

the mountain chief of our Utah peaks.

The Factory at Provo gives to that city a look of enterprise, and progressiveness that other cities would do well to emulate. It is the peer of all such in Deseret. I do not think Eastern capital has helped that much.

At Payson vast quantities of iron ore from Tintic were being loaded for use in our home smelters, instead of the Wyoming ore from Rawlins. It is said to be preferable to the imported article. I hope it will continue to prove so. Our home products should always have the preference. We have but little to spare to buy foreign articles.

Santaquin is 5,100 feet above the sea, and York Station, 5,200 feet, is finally reached, and here endeth the Utah Southern in Juab Valley.

York is a thriving place of three log houses. We dined at the Slough Grass Hotel, preparatory to taking stage for Dixie.

Douglas Jerrold was once asked to write an article on marriage for the London Punch. It was as follows—"Advice to persons about to marry—Don't." To persons seeking a pleasure trip to our southern counties by stage at this season of the year, I would also say, "Don't do it."

The roads were terrible. We were four in number, packed like herrings in a barrel. Reached Nephi, started out in a blinding snow-storm for Levan station, 5,700 feet. By this time we had got packed down in the bed of the wagon, as tight as we could possibly be. It seems a lady from Pioche, who had been chasing a runaway husband all over Utah, was returning from the fruitless chase, with profound disgust for our Utah courts. She had stayed over one night, calculating to take the coach the next night. Having paid her fare, she was determined to go ahead under any circumstances. Where to pack her no one knew. She looked in upon us in the bed of the wagon. Spying around, she topped the trunk at the end of the wagon, and piled in upon us, some 200 pounds of adipose tissue, plus a box of pigeons and a bundle of young peach trees. If my memory serves me right, her pronunciation smacked of the Evergreen Isle. We, who had never before been phrenologically examined, learned for the first time our true characters, and saw ourselves as others see us, free of charge. We expostulated against the terrible time she would have—it was only construed into persecuting an innocent woman.

After pouring out her vials of wrath upon our devoted heads for an hour, she finally relapsed into silence, when all at once the wagon gave a sudden lurch and Bro. Lam-borne and myself felt the weight of her imposing presence and found her in our laps. More soft speeches and inuendoes, and we once more got her on the top of the trunk.

By this time, quiet reigned in Warsaw. We were stopped, had lost the way, the driver was off hunting the road, snow everywhere, the night was pitch dark. Some three hours was spent hunting the track and we finally got under way. Speaker Colfax was once talking in front of the Salt Lake House and he eloquently spoke of the stage driver who by accident was thrown into a river, and hung on manfully to the sacks of U. S. mail at the risk of his life. The subject was, "Heroes in Every-day Life." Our driver, Abe Flint, was no less a hero in a small way. The night was one that a wolf would be afraid of, yet he stuck to his post and brought us through. In spite of the bad roads the coaches generally run on time.

We passed Scipio early in the morning, weather intensely cold. Altitude of summit between that place and Holden 6,500 feet, Fillmore 5,500 feet, Corn Creek 5,250 feet, Dog Valley 6,000 feet, Cove Fort 6,325 feet, Pine Creek summit 7,000 feet, Beaver 6,250 feet, Parowan 6,360 feet, Cedar 6,150 feet, Kannah 6,050 feet.

I never experienced more intense cold in my life than in the night we passed Pine Creek summit. The wind had drifted the snow so that the animals could hardly travel, and we had to climb afoot. It seemed to take away our breath, but, like other troubles, it was soon over.

I looked at the settlements and towns on my way down, and I am compelled to say that very few of them are in advance of five years ago, when I last passed through them. It is natural to expect that the old settled places will be chang-

ing in appearance architecturally, yet it is rare that solid improvements manifest themselves.

I think I can see for the old settled places a great change yet in the future. We shall have to adopt the plan pursued by the British government in India. We must store up our water supply. I hope to see the day when the Territory will appoint an engineer to examine and report on the feasibility of erecting reservoirs holding sufficient water to bring into cultivation a greater area of land. There is enough water runs to waste in all of the sparsely watered localities to water a tract of land twice the size of that now under cultivation. Such reservoirs would serve other purposes, such as fish ponds, securing a summer's supply of ice, skating ponds, and furnishing opportunities for boating in summer time. They could be surrounded with walks and trees, and would form the basis for small parks. Of course rigid regulations would control them, so that cattle could not destroy the banks. They would have to be guarded and under complete control of competent persons. Such measures would enable the large number of young men now wanting homes to find means to enjoy such blessings near the old homestead, instead of roaming all over the country to settle down.

The road from Beaver to Kannah is over the finest land I ever saw, to all appearance. Reservoirs and artesian wells will yet cause the blank earth to smile with plenty upon the hardworking pioneers, who inaugurate these improvements. In India, in many places the government has built heavy walls of masonry across the river beds, thus keeping back an immense supply of water for agricultural purposes.

Splendid beds of coal have been found in Cedar Canyon, eight feet thick. In fact there seems no limit to the supplies of coal and iron on the rim of the basin. If I am not mistaken, this part of Utah will see very lively times before very long, and I do not think it will come amiss to the people, for each town has a history of its own. The privations and trials of the early settlers will have their recompense. I hope that a careful history is kept of each city and town, and the incidents connected with the settling up of the country. The names of the first comers who have manfully held on should be held in remembrance for ever.

As we were passing down we heard rumors of an immense discovery in Bull Valley, west of Pinto Creek, or somewhere in that locality. It was rumored that a vein of gold, one inch in thickness, had been discovered and the gold was of the purest quality. It was the vein once worked by the Mexicans and for which diligent search had been made for some years, the identical brass kettles used by the ancient miners were found in the shaft. A gentleman told me that when he passed through Pinto the children were let out of school to enjoy the excitement of the great find. I presume by this time that 20-dollar gold pieces are being extracted from this wonderful mine.

The Great Western Iron Works are producing pig iron at the rate of three tons a day. When the pigs squeal with the returns in green backs, it will help out an enterprise that will yet be a benefit to thousands.

We have now reached the Rim of the Great Basin. The tree cactus and other growths remind me that we are nearing a warmer clime. As far south as Beaver there is plenty of snow, but from there to Kannah the roads are dusty. We shall drop down into the rocks and sand of Dixie's land to-morrow, and as this epistle is well drawn out, the wonders of the land of the cotton and the vine will be reserved for our next.

C. R. SAVAGE.

Fatal Avalanche.

BRIGHAM CITY, March 25, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

A terrible avalanche visited Cold Spring Canyon, twelve miles north of here, yesterday, whereby Isaac Lewis and Ephraim Cutler have, to all human appearance, perished. Said two men had left their residences in Call's Fort the preceding evening, or a little before dark, to go to their encampment in the canyon to chop timber, which work they had been engaged in for some time previously. David Lewis, one