



ELIAS SMITH, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Wednesday, April 29, 1863.

TO THE PUBLIC.

I hereby inform the public that the *DESERET NEWS* is not and has not been an organ of mine, for, except matter accompanied with my name, I have only occasionally, and that too some time ago, known any more of the contents of the *News* until after it is published, than I have of the copy furnished to the compositors of the *New York Ledger*.

BRIGHAM YOUNG.

G. S. L. City, Jan. 28, 1863.

CORPORATION IMPROVEMENTS.

As is well known, the Legislative Assembly by an act entitled an "act in relation to Territorial, County and City taxes," approved Jan. 17th, 1862, inhibited the levying, assessing or collecting of any tax for any purpose whatever, by any County or corporate City, excepting a certain poll-tax therein named, thereby depriving not only the Counties, but the several Cities throughout the Territory, of means to make any public improvements, further than might be done or effected by funds derived from other sources, which in most instances, as far as Counties have been concerned, has not since the passage of said act, so far as our knowledge extends, been sufficient for the purchase of the requisite books and stationery, for making or keeping public records, and the transaction of the business required of the County officers. With the Corporation, and especially with some of them, circumstances have been different, as they have not altogether been resourceless. The amount of revenue annually accruing to Great Salt Lake City from various sources, since the passage of said act, has been considerable, enabling the City Council to make some public improvements of a valuable nature, and to contribute liberally to the repairing of roads and bridges washed away or damaged by the floods of 1862, beyond the limits of the Corporation, how much we cannot now positively state, but to the amount of several thousand dollars.

Of the acts of our fellow men, however honorable, liberal or commendable they may be in their several spheres, either public or private, we are not perhaps as much inclined to speak approvingly as we ought. We have long been of the opinion that man owes much to his fellow man, and that the punctual and faithful performance of duties, especially those of a public nature, does not constitute the doer a public creditor, to that extent that many seem to imagine, although we firmly believe, that ultimately every human being will be rewarded according to his works. Entertaining such views in relation to public servants, of what ever class they may be, and among whom we have been numbered, by far the greatest part of our life, serving most of the time without pecuniary reward or the hope thereof, we seldom laud their doings, and when favorable mention is made of any circumstance, occurrence or act, it is more in reference to the public weal than the subserviency of any other end.

Notwithstanding our ultra notions relative to such matters, we would regret exceedingly to do injustice to any human being, friend or foe, by withholding a just meed, for meritorious acts done and performed, or by giving credit when or where it was not due. Some men are more fond of laudatory notices than others, and more susceptible of flattery, and there are not a few who seem to take infinite pleasure in announcing their own doings and sayings, while others are exactly the reverse. Among the latter we have classed as a body the municipal officers of Great Salt Lake City, who never trumpet their acts, which

are generally performed with so little ceremony, that the public are not always advised of what they are doing or have done, till after the accomplishment of the work. Acting upon that principle during the past year, when thousands and tens of thousand of dollars have been expended on roads, bridges and other public improvements within and outside the Corporation, which has been donated or raised by subscription in the absence of any public revenue, the City Council have contributed liberally for the furtherance of those objects, but have been so reticent in relation to it, that but few outside of the Council excepting those under whose direction the means thus appropriated has been expended, have known from what source the means was obtained. Such was the case in relation to a liberal appropriation towards making the road and embankments in the south-west part of the City, to which reference was made in last week's issue.

From representations which had been made while those improvements were in progress we had been led to believe that the poll tax in the Second Road District, had been made subservient to some considerable extent, in making the road in question, but it seems that there was but a small amount of labor or means derived from that source, and that in addition to the appropriation made by the City Council, private individuals donated largely for the accomplishment of the work.

That a poll tax for road purposes, which most Yankees think very essential to the making and the keeping of public roads in repair, as a general thing is a great humbug, we well know, having witnessed its practical operations in many instances, and if a debt could accrue for public services rendered, large dues might be claimed by those who aided or were instrumental in expunging from the statutes of the Territory in 1854, the law providing for the collection of such taxes, after which an immunity therefrom was enjoyed by the people for the space of eight years. The law was revived in a new form during the eleventh annual session, but its enforcement for the purposes intended is most certainly not practicable, and it virtually amounts to little or nothing; however in the instance referred to, we had been induced to believe that by superior management the tax had been turned to some account, which if so, would certainly have been one circumstance in its favor. The point was erroneously conceded under wrong impressions, but the discovery of the error has not lessened the favorable opinion previously entertained relative to the qualifications of Supervisor Cunningham, as an efficient officer.

Notwithstanding our aversion to the law, we believe that it should be honored and enforced to the letter, so long as it shall remain on the statute books, and all subject to its provisions should comply with them readily on being required, thereto by their respective supervisors.

In referring to the public improvements in the lower wards, which are truly creditable to the originators and makers, one and all, no injustice to the city officers or other individuals was intended. That any one thinks so we are not aware, but fearing that some interested parties might think that credit had been given where it was not due, on learning the facts in the case it was deemed proper to make the foregoing explanations, which we trust will be satisfactory to all parties.

Concerning the public improvements that have been and are being made by the City, and the management of affairs by the officers of the Corporation, we may have something to say at another and more convenient time; but with the exception of a few omissions of duty, so far as now known, nothing can in justice be said of a reprehensible character. It is believed by some, however, that occasionally nuisances exist within the limits of the city, without proper measures being taken for their removal or abatement, which is merely a matter of opinion.

ITEMS OF SOUTHERN NEWS.

About the 10th instant President Davis issued an address to the people of the Southern Confederacy urging them to devote themselves to agricultural labor for the production of food for themselves and the defenders of their country in the battlefield. He admits that the soldiers were then on half rations of meat—there being plenty, however, in the Confederacy, but insufficient means of trans-

portation. This deficiency, he states, was about to be remedied. He reviews in glowing language the gigantic achievements, not only of their arms, but of the indomitable, industrial enterprises mainly created, fostered and impelled by the necessities of the war. "To oppose the invading forces, composed of levies which already exceed thirteen hundred thousand men," he says, "we had no resources but union and the valor of a people determined to be free, and were so destitute of military supplies that ten thousand of our citizens were reluctantly refused admission into service from inability to furnish arms, while for months some of our strongholds owed their safety chiefly to the concealment of the fact that we were without supplies of powder for our cannon. Your devotion and patriotism triumphed over all obstacles, called into existence munitions of war, clothing and sustenance, which enabled our soldiers to illustrate their valor on numerous battlefields, and to inflict crushing blows on successive armies, each of which our arrogant foes fondly imagined to be invincible. The contrast between our past and present condition is well calculated to inspire full confidence in the triumph of our arms. At no previous time of the war have our forces been so numerous, so well organized, so thoroughly disciplined, armed and equipped as at the present. The high water on which the enemy relied to enable their fleets of gunboats to penetrate into our country and devastate our homes, is fast passing away, yet our strongholds of the Mississippi still bid defiance to the foe. Months of costly preparations for their reduction have been spent in vain. Disaster has been the result of their every effort to reduce the strongholds of the Mississippi. Within a few weeks the falling waters and the increasing heat of Summer will complete their discomfiture and compel their baffled and defeated forces to the abandonment of the expedition on which they based their chief hope of success in effecting our subjugation. We must not forget, however, that the war is not yet ended; that we are still confronted by powerful armies, and threatened by numerous fleets; that the Government which controls these fleets and armies driven to the most desperate effort to effect the most unholy purpose in which it has thus far been defeated, will use its utmost energy to avert this impending doom, so fully merited by the atrocities it has committed and the savage barbarities which it has encouraged; and its crowning attempt is to excite a servile population to massacre our wives, daughters and helpless children." Engaged in such a contest, he thinks there is but one danger that the Government of their choice ought to regard with apprehension—which, as may be obviously inferred, is a failure of supplies for the army—to avert which, this appeal is now made to the "never-failing patriotism" which they have exhibited since the beginning of the war.

Charleston, S. C., and Wilmington, N. C., continue to be ports of entry and clearance for blockade-runners laden with coffee, salt, saltpetre, arms and ammunition for the Confederates; and it is stated, as one of the relieving features of the harbor lock-up attempted to be established by the Federals that, during the past year, Charleston has enjoyed a more extensive direct foreign trade than ever before in her history as a seaport town. These adventures are paying investments—especially so when successful; but, if ill-starred and captured by the not-too-wide-awake sea-monsters of Uncle Samuel, drifting in school off the entrance of the Southern harbors, they are made food for his carnivorous maw—cargo and hulk—with no intention or disposition to offer any compensation for the rich repast. The only recourse then left the adventurer is to charge the loss to their own luckless temerity and, if balanced in any degree by the profit derived from such costly morceaus of experience, though dearly bought, they may not prove altogether abortive.

At Branchville, N. C., on the 12th inst., the Government (Confederate) storehouses were destroyed by fire, consuming also fifty thousand rations of bacon and a large quantity of flour and sugar.

On the 13th, Gen. Wheeler captured two Federal trains on the railroad between Nashville and Murfreesboro. He took from them a number of prisoners, including two majors, three captains, and three of Rosecrans' staff; also, thirty thousand dollars—in greenbacks, of course.

God has advanced to upwards of three hundred per cent. This reduces the value of a Confederate dollar note to less than twenty-five cents. Even bank notes were selling in Richmond at a premium of fifty per cent.

A large powder manufactory is being erected by the Confederate Government at Augusta, Ga. A late *Charleston-Mercury*, in referring to the work, says, when completed, they will be the most extensive powder works in the world. They are now, says the *Mercury*, superior to any known, and the powder fully equal to the best Yankee or European standard.

In a recent report to the Confederate Congress, Jeff. Davis urges that the interest of Northern stockholder in Southern telegraph lines, amounting to nearly four hundred thousand dollars, be sequestered, or appropriated by the Government. The report also recommends the seizure of all the telegraph lines in the South, to be placed under control of the Confederate Post Office Department—the Government indemnifying all citizen owners for their losses.

The people of the South are reduced to great destitution in breadstuffs, as also other necessary family supplies. Women strikes, or forcible demonstrations of combined masses of women, have occurred in several of the principal cities. In Richmond they could not be dispersed by the military, and the chief authorities could scarcely quiet them by promises of immediate relief. They are represented as being principally composed of married women, having families to support, while their husbands are in the Confederate service.

In Petersburg, Va., about the 7th inst., the soldiers' wives and others arose en masse, went to the stores of mercenary speculators, who had been enriching themselves by holding all necessities of life at enormous prices, and forcibly helped themselves to whatever they wanted, pitching out goods to the poor and needy as they went.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR.

Although no great battles have been fought this spring, many minor conflicts have occurred, and much property and many lives have been destroyed in the aggregate, in truth the war has been and is steadily progressing with no more probability that it will terminate this year than existed six months ago. Relative to the operations of the army of the Potomac nothing definite has been reported of late. The belligerent movements on the Blackwater and Nansmond in Eastern Virginia, which were reported a short time since to have been somewhat threatening, have not culminated in any general engagements between the Federal and Confederate armies, opposing each other on that part of the great battlefield.

It is stated that Gen. Foster succeeded in escaping in a steamer from Little Washington, and returned to Newbern, where he placed himself at the head of a formidable force and marched to the relief of the beleaguered town and garrison, and that the prospects favored success against the besiegers under Gen. Hill.

Charleston, at latest dates, was enjoying a season of peace and quietness, and it is reported that Admiral Dupont will not make another attack on the harbor defenses till after the new arrangements which have been inaugurated for the reduction of that stronghold shall have been completed.

No decisive movement has been made in Tennessee as yet, so far as known, but a belief is said to be entertained in high official circles that the great battle of the war will be fought somewhere between Nashville and Chattanooga within the next sixty days.

The running of the blockade at Vicksburg by six gunboats and three transports was effected on the night of the 26th inst., with the loss of one transport, the *Henry Clay*, which took fire and was burned. Each of the gunboats and transports had a coal boat in tow. Only one of the gunboats was struck, as nearly all of them got past before the enemy's batteries opened fire. A late report from Memphis states that on the night of the 20th, fifteen other vessels, including several gunboats, also succeeded in running the blockade, and the indications were that things would soon assume a different appearance in that quarter.

At latest dates from New Orleans, General Banks' prospects were more flattering. The *Queen of the West* had been recaptured.