

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

A WORTHY ACTION.

It gives pleasure to record another of those instances of generosity which manifest the broad philanthropy and public spirit of some men who have property at their disposal. Elder Edward Stevenson of Salt Lake City felt that he desired to give a valuable piece of real estate to some worthy institution, and the Latter-day Saints' College was suggested to him as a proper beneficiary. He acted on this prompting, and prepared an absolute deed, transferring the property to the college, without placing any restriction on its use, or condition on its transfer. The gift comprises eighty by one hundred feet on the southwest corner of First South and First West streets. The value of the property, in the present depreciated condition of the real estate market, is about \$8,000. This act of Elder Stevenson is harmonious with a long life spent in the public ministry, and comprising many acts of self-sacrifice and benevolence. May Brother Stevenson live long enough in his tranquil old age to see some of the beneficial results which are sure to flow from his generous bequest.

There is no better way of disposing of surplus property than for the purpose of training the youth in the ways of knowledge and righteousness; and Elder Stevenson's gift comes within that field. The Latter-day Saints' College has proved its worthiness to such support, and its necessity as an educational factor, by the ten years of its successful existence. If a few more of our public spirited citizens would follow the example set them in this act of generosity, such valuable institutions in our State would soon be placed upon a financial footing sufficiently firm to insure them against such difficulties as have harassed them in the past, and would enable them to increase their influence in the field of religious and intellectual culture. This incident is a suggestion to others as to one way of heeding the advice given by the Master with respect to the good Samaritan, "Go and do thou likewise."

MODERN PREACHING.

The New York World notices as a n interesting phenomenon of our time that there is a new and changed activity in the pulpit. Preachers, instead of habitually discussing the niceties of creeds and splitting hairs over questions of eschatology, speak upon matters of "immediate and living importance," as for instance when Dr. Parkhurst takes up the moral side of the monopoly question. Even Mr. Moody. It is claimed, has felt the force of the change brought about and has modified his style of preaching.

The World thinks that this change is unquestionably a wholesome development and one that adds "pulpit force" to the influence of the newspaper in promoting progress. "In-

stead of urging men," the paper says, "to straighten out their doctrinal beliefs in order that they may save their souls after dwarfing them by lives of narrow selfishness, they now seek to save men in this present life from the blight of wrongful conduct and the blot of evil living. They have less to say of faith and more of faithfulness to duty. They talk less of doctrine and more of conduct."

Granted that the change mentioned has taken place, its value or importance as a factor of the progress of humanity can be estimated only after some consideration of the history of the pulpit oratory. There never was any preaching in the world effective for good except by men who were conscious of having a divine message to deliver to their fellowmen and who performed the duty of delivering it with faithfulness, no matter what the particular message was. The first preachers of Christianity—not to go beyond our own era—had such a message, and it was by the divine power sustaining it that they succeeded in changing the world. They rebuked sin, defined doctrines, applied principles, predicted future events, discoursed upon eschatology, refuted errors in theology and even grappled to some extent with social problems, but all with one end in view—the announcement that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Even at Corinth, one of the ancient centers of learning, Paul, according to his own statement, set aside all "excellency of speech or of wisdom" and "determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

After the age of the first Apostles, the consciousness of having a special message to the world grew more faint, and it is easily observed that, the authors of the homilies were grouping about for suitable subjects with which to edify their increasing audiences. Eloquence had to make up for the lack of inspiration, and the questions of the day—political and social—were drawn upon for themes of discussion. The eloquent Chrysostom fell a victim to a remark highly displeasing to the emperor.

Later, as heathen philosophers embraced the new faith, the pulpit was given up to speculations and efforts to harmonize Scripture with supposed philosophical facts. Different schools were formed and the houses of worship became the battleground of antagonistic factions. This continued until public preaching was nearly abandoned, and services consisted chiefly in pompous ceremonies.

The Reformation caused a revival in pulpit oratory, but it was mostly of a controversial nature, Bible exegesis being employed to prove the supposed errors of the opponents. It was mainly through the efforts of so-called Pietists and the religious sects allied to them, that preaching was made of a more practical nature.

Still, since the early Church, the voice of a special divine inspiration has not been heard in the pulpit, until in this age the Lord again sent His messengers to man-

kind. And they come with a special message to this generation. The change noticed in the pulpit of the world is a plain confession that the preachers have no special message to deliver, and therefore must bring the house of worship to the level of the lecture room, or the debating hall. It is a contradiction of the teachings of the last remaining Apostle of our Lord, according to whom, before the consummation of all things, messengers should appear upon the scene saying, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters."

That warning, we conceive, is what the world today needs more than lectures upon moral philosophy, political economy or social problems.

ISSUING ELECTION CERTIFICATES.

There is considerable complaint over the delay in issuing certificates of election to those persons who, in Salt Lake county, received a majority of votes for various legislative and county officers. This county seems to be the only one where there is any dilatory tendency or where there attaches any suspicion of working some scheme; and there should be no occasion of complaint here. The law controlling the matter is very clear, no question having been raised as to its validity, whatever may be thought of another statute bearing on another branch of election work. The canvass of the returns has been made, the result has been officially declared by the county canvassing board's determination that certain persons have been elected, and the certificates of election are now overdue. Any unnecessary delay in their issue is an unlawful act upon the part of a ministerial officer, punishable by a fine of not more than a thousand dollars or by incarceration in the State prison for not more than five years, or both fine and imprisonment. The matter of fixing bonds has nothing to do with the issue of certificates to the officers-elect; the certificates must first issue, and the giving of bonds is a condition precedent to assuming the duties of office; the fixing of bonds belongs wholly to another department of official procedure.

Under the law, the county commissioners, as a canvassing board, "must declare elected the persons having the highest number of votes given for each office to be filled by the votes of a single county or subdivision thereof." In Salt Lake county this has been done; the officers thus affected being members of the Legislature, county officials, etc. The law then directs that "the county clerk must immediately make out and deliver to such persons a certificate of election signed by him and authenticated with his seal." This issue of certificates follows next upon the declaration of the result; there is no intervening action, no question of bonds, no waiting for a supposed prospective contest to materialize, and no chicanery or arrogant putting off; nothing but a reasonable time in which to make out and authenticate the certificates of election. In this county those certificates should