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THE EX-MAYOR,

The New Year has brought a new ad. ministration of municipal affairs in Salt Lake City. This includes a new chief executive officer, and affords an opportunity to express the very general sentiment in relation to the out-going Mayor. Hon. John Clark has given to the city, so far as he had the power, a good, clean, capable and conservative government. Always courteous, calm and gentlemanly in his demeanor; approach. able by persons of all classes, creeds and parties; never off his balance; ready to receive a suggestion; anxious for the public welfare; non-partisan in his decisions; he has yet been ever selfpoised, with convictions of his own, which he was fearless to express without belligerency, but with firmness of purpose and directness of language. No taint of jobbery, undue influence or anything savoring of personal advantage or favoritism, clings to or is breathed against John Clark. He stands, after the ordeal of his public service, irreproachable and without a flaw upon his character. He has served the city ably, honestly, and acceptably. We congratulate him on his release from the cares, vexations and responsibilities of an office, which he did not seek but accepted with reluctance as a public duty. He deserves the gratitude as well as the respect which is felt for him by the very best people in the community regardless of politics. He remains one of our foremost citizens and business leaders, whose integrity is recognized in commercial circles and wherever his name is known. May he live long and enjoy the confidence, good will and esteem in which he is held by the people of this city and

THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE.

Hon, Ezra Thompson, the new Mayor of Salt Lake City, has made a favorable impression on the public by his first message to the City Council. It is concise, intelligible, and contains a

number of good suggestions. The health of the community is indeed, as he states, "of the highest importance." The enforcement of sanitary laws and regulations should be kept in view by the civic authorities. Laxity in this directon would prove a very great evil. The ordinances are ample if executed. There is sufficient power in the hands of the health officers for every necessary purpose and it should be exercised as he advises.

The absolute necessity of a pure water supply in sufficient quantity for the public needs, must be evident to everybody. The Mayor's opinion, in regard to acquiring the water rights of Big Cottonwood creek, we regard as sound, and also his advice in reference to the protection of the water we now have from pollution. The determination he expresses, to defend the water rights of the city against the attempts which have been made to tamper with them, will receive public approval.

As to the appointment of a new officer as commissioner, there will be some difference of opinion among the people. While no one will dispute the necessity of closer investigation of the rights and needs of the city in this direction, many will take the ground that these do not absolutely require an additional office with additional expenses. However, it may be that the future will show wisdom in this movement. Certainly there is no measure of greater public importance that the acquisition and preservation of ample water rights and supplies for Salt Lake City.

The Mayor's recommendations for the keeping of records showing the value of city property; the joining of the offices of oil inspector and of sealer of weights and measures; fixing a salary for the inspector of buildings; the revision of city ordinances; the paving of Third South street; and the increase of city laborers' wages, are all timely and practicable, and the closing sentence of the message will be applauded by the majority of our citizens, if it is not construed to signify the extreme of partisanship in appointments. Harmony and efficiency are both essential in the city government. No one should be connected with it who cannot work in unison with the officials placed in power. But that does not necessarily imply the employment of men simply because of their partisan opinions. Fitness and ability are the great requirements in all departments of the public

We congratulate the new Mayor on his maiden effort, and assure him that if he proceeds along the lines which he has marked out, he will receive the support of the better portion of the community, no matter what may be their views on national affairs. The welfare of the city should be paramount and we hope the desire to promote it will rise above all personal and party consid-

THE NEW CITY COUNCIL.

The City Council, under the new ad-

guished Its beginning, is a good sign of

The returns of the last municipal election are to be taken, of course, as the sentiment of the majority of our citizens. That has placed in power the representatives of a great political party. It is therefore to be expected that we shall have that kind of an administration. The minority should view the matter in that light and take it as pleasantly as they can, and they should not seek, in any way, to obstruct the course of the majority. But it must not be forgotten that minorities have rights, and that they should be respected.

The minority of the City Council represent a large portion of the people of this city. Indeed, the population is pretty evenly divided in party politics. While it is to be expected that the representatives of the party now in authority will exercise the right of selfpreservation and party advantage, they should not close their eyes to the possibilities of the future, nor to the present interests of the whole municipality. Their course will be watched with critical eyes, and they should be wise enough not to give any real occasion for animadversion.

Much that was done in the City

Council on Tuesday will meet the ap-

proval of the general public. But one step was taken which, in our opinion, was unwise and unnecessary. We refer to the action by which it was determined that a suspension of the rules can be effected by a majority vote. This is so strongly partisan that it gives occasion for unfavorable comment. Just and intelligent people among the supporters of the party in power, will be just as strong in their criticisms of that step as will fairminded men of the opposite party. We do not know of any set of parliamentary rules which includes such an arbitrary and unfair provision. It virtually shuts out the minority from taking practical part in the city affairs. No such a gag rule, so far as we are aware, was ever adopted in a legislative body. In all the works on rules of order, the principle of the two-thirds vote as requisite for the suspension of rules, is set forth and emphasized. The rules of the British Parliament and those of the Congress of the United States, and also of State legislatures, municipal bodies, societies, corporations and assoclations of every kind, uniformly, so far as we are aware, require a twothirds vote for this purpose. Even under the revised rules of the House of

Reed occasioned so much objection, this rule remained intact. We have before us the Rules and Practice of the House of Representatives in the Fifty-fifth Congress, published at the government printing office in 1898, from which we quote the fol-

Representatives which, under Speaker

"1-No rule shall be suspended ex-cept by a vote of two-thirds of the ance quite early this year. ent; nor shall the Speaker entertain a motion to suspend the rules, except on the first and third Mondays of each nonth, preference being given on the first Monday to individuals, and on the third Monday to committees, and during the last six days of the session. 2-All motions to suspend the rules shall, before being submitted to the

tellers if demanded. "3-When a motion to suspend the rules has been seconded, it shall be in order before the final vote is taker hereon to debate the proposition to be roted upon for forty minutes; one half of such time to be given to debate in favor of, and one half to debate in opposition to such proposition; and the same right of debate shall be allowed whenever the previous question has been ordered, on any proposition on which there has been no debate."

House, be seconded by a majority by

We think that rule should form a good guide to the present City Council. It is not and should not be a party question in any sense whatever. It is recognized, and has been from time mmemorial, as a just and proper regulation, as it gives an opportunity for both sides of a question to be fully presented. Anything in the shape of a gag is obnoxious and will not redound to the benefit of those who resort to it. The rule should be changed to be in conformity with those of other legis-

We hope and expect that the present City Council will be measurably, if not entirely free, from the unseemly contentions which, to some extent, deprived the late City Council of its dignity, and the respect which should be felt for so important a body by the general public. The Deseret News will sustain all measures and movements intended for the public benefit, and trusts it will not have occasion to find further fault. The promotion of the general welfare is beyond all petty and party motives and purposes, and this paper is for the people and not for any faction or class. We wish the new city administration full and complete success.

THAT FENIAN PLOT.

The talk about the revival of the Fenian movement, is presumably only talk, notwithstanding the sentiments expressed by some anti-British public orators. There are, to be sure, some adventurous spirits in this country, who would gladly do something to obtain notoriety, but it is not probable that they would deliberately run their necks into a noose, without having absolute control of the other end of it. There is excitement enough for all adventurers, both in the Philippines and in South Africa. Soldiers are in demand at present.

The Fenian movement started almost half a century ago, at a time when the struggle between England and Ireland was intense. It was a political organization with a military cast. It was born on Irish soil, but was transplanted to American soil by the immigrants from the Emerald Isle, and it seems that it was in New York that the Fenian brotherhood was first formally given an organization. Its prototype in Ireland was the Phoenix society, and the two organizations were merged in-

It is believed that the Fenians would gladly have seen the commencement of a war between this country and Great Britain, but that has not materranged. Neither has an opportunity ministration, has commenced its pro- for invading Canada presented itself, ceedings with full vigor if not with per- and the society has consequently not fect discretion. It has begun busi- seen any of its aspirations take tanginess in a business spirit. The prompt- ble form. The ridiculous crossing of

cupation of Fort Erle was a shortlived military career. The United States took a hand in the game, with the result that the movement all but died a natural death.

Were there any suspicion that at the present time American citizens, or aliens on American soil, are planning a hostile movement against Great Britain, it would be the duty of our government to investigate the matter and if the rumors are substantlated, prevent the consummation of such a scheme. There may be a difference of opinion as to the justification for the English to carry on a war in Africa, but there can be no doubt of the duty of a government to deny an asylum to those who plot against friendly governments. Switzerland was compelled, some years ago, not to open its doors to nihilists and anarchists, although freedom of speech and of the press is a fundamental principle in Swiss government. On the same ground this government would be morally bound to suppress any society that is known to lay hostile plans against another power. There can be no Fenian invasion of Canada

from territory belonging to Uncle Sam. Besides all other considerations there is this that the Revised Statutes provides that any person in the United States who begins, or prepares the means for any military expedition or enterprise against the territory or dominions of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people with whom the United States are at peace, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding \$3,000, and imprisoned not more than three years.

That cannot but discourage any Fenian plot in this country against

AN UNNECESSARY AGITATION.

The Boston Herald, one of the influential journals that have taken a rational and conservative view of the subject of so much recent agitation, has this to say in its issue of Dec. 28:

"We can conceive of no doubt that an anti-polygamy amendment to the Constitution of the United States would be adopted by the vote of the requisite imber of State legislatures, provided Congress shall see fit to pass it. And yet we find it difficult to believe that such an amendment is necessary. It certainly ought not to be in this stage of American civilization. It is not flattering to the pride of our people to be obliged to acknowledge the necessity of adopting this method of stamping out a reproach to any civilization in the closing days of the nineteenth century, and we think, in view of the apparently conceded fact that polygamy is dying out of itself, that there should be serious deliberation before taking that step. The men who made our national Constitution were averse to recognizing slavery by name in it, and there would be a propriety in their successors taking the same attitude toward the other 'twin relic of barbarism.'"

The January thaw put on an appear-

The abolition of the fee system in paying city officials is in harmony with the State Constitution. The system is a good thing to be rid of.

The government financial report shows that the expenditures for December have been reduced below those of the previous year; but the taxes keep up safely enough.

Bubonic plague is in Manila. Its spread would be a terrible danger to the American troops now there, and the military authorities may be relied on to use vigorous efforts to stamp it out.

The reports from Ladysmith make it clear that the place must be relieved soon or relief will be unnecessary. Sickness and privation are making serious inroads on the strength of the garrison,

Considerable mud throwing has been going on in southern California geysers since the recent earthquake. There seems to be fair promise of another upheaval, according to the reports that

Denmark wants to sell the Danish West Indies to the United States for \$3,000,000. That is less than half the amount asked a few years ago, but Denmark would be well rid of them at that price.

Indiana has a county treasurer who says he does not know where the books of his office and the public moneys he was custodian of are gone. He will probably have time in jail to refresh his recollection, unless his memory revives

"Extenuating, circumstances" seems to be infectious in French courts. It is incorporated in the verdict convicting M. De Roulede of conspiracy. The new puzzle is to learn what extenuation there is for conspiring against the government.

London dispatches refer to a "row" in the British war office. This and the rumored impending changes in the cabinet show that the English public are convinced a great blunder has been made, and that reorganization at home is the best medicine to cure the nation's

The czar will not allow Russia to make a war exhibit at the Paris exhibition. This course is followed to impress the Russian ruler's desire for peace, and therefore he will not make an apparent boast of war devices. Besides, Ruseia may need all its preparations nearer home.

Letter heads, bill heads, public documents, etc., which are made out for 189- or 18- are now out of date, and require blurring to make them anything like accurate. That renders them inelegant and slovenly in appearance. This suggests a lot of job work for printers, and also the desirability of calling on or sending to the Deseret News for new supplies.

Injunctions don't go in Milwaukee, according to councilmanic action there, Three orders of court not to do a thing were disregarded, and the proscribed ordinance passed. It is notable that the railroads which secured the injunctions have so little faith in making them hold that they are subscribing to the terms of the new ordinance regu-

The English claim of a right to search

same claim regarding German ships has brought notice from the kaiser's government that the latter will not tolerate it. The probability is that Britain's lesson of nearly ninety years ago will induce an abandonment of the claim in this instance. Neutral powers have rights which nations at war are bound to respect, or to get trouble for their pains.

It was announced from London that the British under Gen. French had completely defeated the Boers and occupied Colesberg, through the general's official report did not mention the occupation. Then the Boers asserted that they had repulsed the British attack and still held Colesberg, Now the English report is that the Boers reoccupied the place in force. That state of facts bears the appearance that the boasts of victory were premature.

It is a common failing with some folks and some papers to take credit to themselves for almost everything said and done that is commendable. They also often claim the gift of foresight which is not manifest until it becomes an aftersight; as in the case of the old lady, who, when her son rushed in and said: "The cow has swallowed the grindstone," exclaimed: "There! I knew it, I always said that would happen." The public usualty view these egotisms with amusement. But when a paper claims to be the author and inventor and hold an original patent on the idea that laws should be obeyed or repealed, and requires all people to behold with awe its superior wisdom and prior right, the spectacle is too silly to laugh at. It is a sign of certain decay.

DELAGOA BAY.

Cleveland Plain Dealer. The story of a secret treaty between Great Britain, Germany and Portugal for the partition of Portuguese territory in South Africa between the two former powers, Great Britain getting Delagoa Bay and the territory behind it up to the Transvaal, is of the kind "Important if true." Notwithstanding the circumstantiality of the German paper's account there is much reason to doubt its truth. From all diplomatic quarters come denials of its accuracy but that was to have been expected The story may be inaccurate in several of its details and yet have a foundation of fact. That Great Britain would be willing to enter into some such arrange. ment can hardly be doubted, but there are obstacles in the way. Germany might consent to the scheme, but Great Britain and Germany are not the only powers concerned in a new partition of Africa, and when Portugal closes out its interests on that continent France is likely to put in a claim to be consid-

Denver Post.

To obtain hold of that strip of Portu-guese territory to the east of the South African Republic has been the dream of Great Britain's statesmen for many a year, for with it in their possession the English would control the whole of the eastern coast of South Africa and as much of the interior as they could reach. The Transvaal would be at their mercy without firing a gun, as then it would be surrounded by British territory on every side. But there are others as fully acquainted with the value of Delagoa Bay to Great Britain as the English themselves, and that is one reason why England thus far has been unable to obtain possession of it. That in course of time it may do so is among the possibilities, but not now or in the near future. The result of the present war will, to a great extent, settle this question. Should the Boers remain victorious, they will strive to obtain hold of the bay in some manner, so as to secure for them a permanent outlet to the east.

San Francisco Chronicle.

What Great Britain pays Portugal in the trade in addition to the canceling of the amount which may be awarded her by the Swiss arbitrators of her four million dollar claim against Portugal is not stated. At the present juncture she could afford to pay a large sum, and no doubt Portugal has not neglected her opportunity. Possession of Delagoa Bay has become a military ne-cessity to England. She has been unable to prevent the passage of men and materials and supplies to the Trans-vaal through Lourenzo Marquez without committing acts which are suspiciously near to violations of internaional law, threatening her friendly inercourse with other nations. The cesslon of Portuguese territory to Mozambique will complete the British cordon around the two South African republics and will presumably put a stop to fur-ther importations of contraband.

St. Paul Pioneer Press. What makes the case exceptionally exasperating to Great Britain is that if it were not for this back door she would practically have the Transvaal beleaguered, and could cut off almost all of its supplies. If either she or the Transvaal were in possession of the Portuguese strip she could do what it is forbidden her to do to a neutral and close the port. And the worst of it is that as late as 1875 only the decision of the president of France on a delicate question of international law prevented her from gaining possession. Furthermore, she has a reversionary interest in the bay which time will bring to frui-

Worcester Spy.

This scizing of vessels laden with cargoes bound for Delagoa Bay by Great Britain, is a matter of very serious consideration for administration officials and international lawyers in this country, because of the importance of the principle involved. It likely that Great Britain holds that flour intended for the Boer troops is contraband, and this intention will undoubtedly be supported by the fact that the Boer farmers have been compelled in consequence of the war, to abandon their fields and the Pretorian government would in consequence be benefitted by the seizing of the flour.

THE BUBONIC PLAGUE.

New York Mail and Express. The reported outbreak of bubonic plague in Honolulu where it is said to have been conveyed by Japanese coolies, calls for the utmost vigilance on the part of the health authorities at all ports on the Pacific coast. Commercial intercourse between Hawaii and San Francisco is so intimate that anything short of the most rigorous measures to guard against an invasion of the pestilence would be almost criminal. The vigilant and successful effort of the health officials of this port to prevent an outbreak of the plague from infected vessels lying in our own harbor offers an example which should

the Pacific coast. Denver Post.

be promptly followed by every city on

The blessings of coolie labor have become apparent now in the Hawaiian Islands through the introduction of the bubonic plague, which now exists in the Asiatic quarter of Honolulu. It will not be very long before we shall hear of its appearance on the Pacific coast. The health authorities in San Francisco are much alarmed at what they term the American vessels on the high seas been any medical examination of the criminal carelessness of the Hawailan ness and order which have distin- the Niagara river, in 1866, and the 9c- brought on the war of 1812. Now the thousands of coolies imported by the

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planters on the islands since Hawaii was annexed to the United States. The civil authorities there expected the military to take charge of the matter, and they in turn, without saying so much, thought it was none of their bus-iness, as they were there but temporar-

Los Angeles Express.

The news brought by the transports Centennial and Newport that the bu-bonic plague has found lodgment among squalid Chinese at Honolulu is unpleasant. It should and no doubt will make our quarantine officers vigilant to prevent any cases reaching the Pacific coast. Health conditions are such on the coast that very little apprehension is felt that even if some cases were brought it would find much upon which to feed. It is a case, however, where prevention is much better than

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