

holders should go to war and be killed we would be obliged, under our contract, to pay every policy. At present we are instructed by the home office to be very careful in issuing life insurance. No one who intimates that he will enlist in case of war will be accepted. If any applicant makes a false statement in this regard we would simply cancel his policy for violation of contract. Our present patrons need not feel alarmed, as their policies, in case of death, will be promptly paid."

There seems to be some doubt about the actual carrying out of the assurances attributed to Mr. Harris, and there is a probability that there would be a general refusal to pay insurance on the lives of men killed in battle. The Chicago Times-Herald takes this view. It says:

"Men who are carrying life insurance policies would in case of war be placed in an embarrassing position. None of these men could volunteer to serve their country without forfeiting their life insurance policies. With many men this would mean the surrender of the only provision made by them for the support of their families. It may be urged that the government would take care of the widows and orphans, but such support would necessarily be meager in the extreme, if granted at all, and many patriotic men might well hesitate to imperil the future of their family, even though willing and anxious to imperil their own lives for the sake of their country."

The problem of life insurance in its relations to the army and navy in case of war, has yet to be solved.

THE PLAGUE AT BOMBAY.

So much space has been given by the papers of war news, or news of prospective wars, that the American public has not been kept well posted concerning a pestilence that has been raging during the winter in and near Bombay, India. A recent report from there states that the number of deaths in a single week, from the plague, has run as high as 1,134, and from other diseases and causes 933, making the total mortality for seven days, 2,067. These figures apply to the city of Bombay alone. In the city as high as 348 deaths have occurred in a single day.

The city might be besieged by a large army and make a stubborn defense with continuous fighting without increasing this mortality; which goes to show that, while battles between armies are very destructive to human life, pestilence may become far more so.

JUSTICE LONG DEFERRED.

Judge W. N. Dusenberry of Provo has just returned from an important errand to the nation's capital. Over seventeen years ago the collector of internal revenue for the government, the late O. J. Hollister, levied a tax upon certain scrip which was used by various institutions of the Territory as a matter of convenience in paying off employees, cash not being always available. The scrip obtained more or less circulation, according to where and by what places issued, but it was never regarded as currency, much less as a means of usurping the functions of legal tender. No less than \$13,000 in money as such taxes was exacted from these institutions, a great hardship at the time, much greater than it would have been in later years, although a burden unjustly imposed never becomes less a burden because of the improved circumstances of the victim thereof. A test of the matter was finally made, it reaching the Su-

preme court of the United States, by which the imposition and collection were pronounced illegal. Last January Senator Rawlins introduced a bill providing for the refund of the money, and Judge Dusenberry's object was the pushing ahead of the measure.

It would seem to be about as little as the government could properly do in such a case to return money which its agents unlawfully took away, and any steps looking to such return should be accelerated rather than retarded. Doubtless with a full understanding, which sometimes is much more satisfactorily and speedily gained by means of personal interviews than through the routine of legislation, there will be no opposition. This, we understand, the judge has fully attended to, and such being the case those to whom the money belongs should not be compelled to go without it much longer.

DOCTRINAL QUESTIONS.

A correspondent writing from St. Charles, Idaho, under date of the 11th inst., asks the "News" to explain a passage of Scripture with reference to certain persons whom he names, who were prominently connected with the early rise of the Church, fell away and were re-admitted. The whole subject is doctrinal in character, and the request of the correspondent for an elucidation of it by the "News" is made for his personal information.

Sometimes the circumstances connected with such a request render it advisable or even necessary for the "News" to comply; as for example, when the interests of the Church, or of a considerable number of persons may be involved; but in most cases wherein individual members of the Church, for their personal benefit, seek information on some doctrinal matter, or to have some passage of Scripture explained, they can be accommodated by applying to the proper ecclesiastical officers of the ward or Stake in which they reside, and usually this is the better course to pursue. No doubt the correspondent is seeking light in good faith, but as it is a personal matter with him, and a proper elucidation of it could not well be condensed into the space that could consistently be given to it in these columns, he is kindly recommended to do as indicated.

A BATTLE BETWEEN WARSHIPS.

One of the most frightful experiences a mortal can pass through and survive, is a pitched battle at fair range between two modern warships, built, armed and manipulated according to the latest models and methods. Such a ship, lying peacefully upon a gentle sea, presents a scene of wonderful quiet, order and calmness. Its ponderous mechanism, adjusted to a hair, moves as smoothly as a planet in space. The perfection of neatness and cleanliness prevails everywhere. There is a place for everything and everything is in its place. The ventilation is perfect in every part of the vessel, and a touch turns on an electric blaze which illuminates every nook and corner. Each officer and man has been trained and drilled until they all speak and move with the precision of automatons.

True, there is an air of awe about the big guns. How ponderous they are! How immense their length and girth! One looks at them and tries to imagine what they can do, what noise they make, and what force there is to the explosion that takes place within them; even as a little child looks at the moon and wonders how large it is

and how far away. But when those guns begin to do the work for which destructive genius created them, the beholder realizes how puerile and inadequate was his imagination.

Before a gun is fired every man whose duty brings him near it must tightly plug his ears or be permanently deafened by the shock the surrounding air receives as the projectile and its propelling gases leave the muzzle of the gun. Those who stand near to the weapon at the instant of discharge, will likely be knocked down and may be rendered senseless, and this before the enemy has fired a single shot. A courage, calm and well trained, combined with perfect self-control and thorough scientific knowledge, must be traits of the men who fire the guns. What, then, are the qualities required in facing the enemy's fire?

Perhaps immediately after the battle opens the funnels are shot away. This destroys the draught of the furnaces and a horrible, stifling smoke fills the vessel between decks. Ventilation ceases and the air becomes hot to suffocation. Then if a shot from the enemy succeeds in crippling the electrical machinery which furnishes the current for the lamps, darkness the blackest is added to the smoke and heat, and the interior of the vessel becomes a literal, torturing hell. Not the least of the torments the men below are suffering are their agonizing doubts and fears. They know nothing of how the battle goes. The enemy may be sinking or they themselves may be; they cannot tell.

It is hard to decide who are worst off, the men on deck or those below. Every impact of a projectile of the enemy against the steel walled turret fills the air with a shower of red hot metallic splinters that sweep it in every direction like a radiating broadside, killing the men by platoons, or mangle them most shockingly. The men in the open air have at least one advantage over those between decks; they are too busy to spare time to realize the horrors that surround them, and calamities occur too fast to be counted.

The vessel that can first cripple its adversary's steering gear while preserving its own so as to be able to maneuver is pretty sure to win; because a helpless hulk that cannot turn nor move itself is no match for a foe that can describe a circle; but the quickest work is done by the ship that can first land upon the other's deck a short series of dynamite shells, for these are the means man has devised for producing an artificial earthquake; and their enormous power rends and shatters in an instant the strongest work of human hands. Dropped upon by one of them, the strongest deck of toughest steel becomes mere cardboard.

One good thing is that all is quickly over. The employment of the mighty forces of the modern battle ship prevents a long drawn contest. Within a few minutes after the first shot lands upon the weaker vessel most of the men on board of her are dead. Their suspense is brief. If the ship sinks, the tale of what was done on board of her may never be told, for lack of a living witness; for the dead, wounded and unharmed will likely go to the bottom together. Dante never portrayed the hell on board modern warship engaged in desperate action. His imagination, amazing as were its powers, was too feeble.

One of the best sections of range grass country in Montana was swept by fire the latter part of last month and as a result cattle will suffer the coming season. The range affected is in the Pondera country and covers an area of 150 miles square.