

# The Deseret Weekly.

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## THE OLD FOLKS.

THE annual treat to the old folks, which is now an institution of Utah, will be given this year in Salt Lake City. The Union Pacific Railroad has generously agreed to furnish free passage for the aged beneficiaries from Ogden and intermediate points. The Committee intend to give a grand festival in the Exposition building. This, if properly fitted up, as no doubt it will be, will make a magnificent place for the purpose, and accommodate not only all the veteran guests but a host of spectators. July 15th is set for the day on which Utah will delight to do honor to its dear old citizens who are up the down hill of life, and it is the intention to make this occasion one of the happiest and biggest entertainments of the kind ever arranged by the committee. We learn these particulars from the genial C. R. Savage, who has always been active and energetic in promoting these recreations for the aged, with which his name will ever be pleasantly associated. It is to be hoped that the friends who have heretofore extended a liberal hand to aid in these praiseworthy efforts, will not be backward in contributing to the enjoyment of the aged of all classes, parties, creeds and complexions, in this year of grace eighteen hundred and ninety.

## THE NEW EDMUNDS ACT DENOUNCED.

THE New York *Sun* is emphatic in its denunciation of the Edmunds supplemental measure for the confiscation of the property of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It holds that it would be only common fairness and decency to vest in the representatives of the Church the funds arising from the confiscation. After relating what occurred in the Senate when the bill was put upon its passage, the *Sun* says:

"The three dissenting Republican Senators are to be congratulated upon

having sufficient firmness and courage to resist the commands of Mr. Edmunds. We do not think that they will ever have cause to regret it, nor will the Democratic Party deserve anything else than honor for resisting an oppressive and unjust measure. Let the Republicans get and keep all the credit they can from sentimentalists and fanatics for passing it. The Democratic Party is true to the Constitution in refusing to punish religious opinion by confiscation. The Republicans attempt to divert attention from the real character of their proceeding by proposing to use for the maintenance of common schools in Utah the funds arising from the confiscation of the property held for church purposes by a part of the inhabitants of Utah. The virtuous attitude of the Republican party in the matter suggests a burglar who assumes airs of moral superiority because he has dropped a part of the swag into the contribution box.

"The Church of Latter-day Saints has few friends anywhere, and perhaps none among enlightened men and women. Yet whatever have been its errors, its impostures, or its crimes, the mass of its believers have been honest men and women, industrious and thriving colonists. But had it been composed entirely of jailbirds, there would still have been no necessity for confiscating their church property. It is not right to do evil that good may come. The Republican party may yet have cause to regret that it has disregarded justice for a little cheap applause."

## THE RIGHT NOBLY DEFENDED.

THE following which appeared in the Denver *Republican* under the head of "National Honesty," does great credit to that journal:

"It is strange that a newspaper of the standing of the Springfield, Mass., *Republican* indorses Senator Edmunds' plan for transferring the escheated property of the Mormon Church over to the public schools of Utah. It is still more strange that it urges that provision be made to prevent the Mormons from controlling the public schools of the Territory after this money shall be transferred to the school fund.

"One does not have to be a defender of Mormonism to see in this a close resemblance to the policy pursued by the persecutors of the Protestants in the sixteenth century. It is the old theory over again, that a government has a right to take away the property of people whose views on certain questions do not accord with those of the government. That this is unjust and immoral cannot be denied by any fair-minded man.

"The fact that the Mormon church teaches polygamy has very little to do with the case. Apart from its teaching of the doctrine of polygamy the Mormon church has as much right to exist and to hold property as any other church organization in the United States. It is also true that a great majority of the Mormons are not polygamists, and that the greater part of the property of that church was contributed by or collected from people who are not polygamists. The church as a religious organization and the Mormons who are not polygamists have rights which are as much entitled to the protection of the government as the rights of any other church or of any other church members.

"The truth is, that the Springfield

*Republican*, like ninety-nine out of a hundred of the other newspapers of the country, is blinded by prejudice against the Mormons. No man should make an opponent's religion an excuse for mistreatment of him.

"The men who are guilty of polygamy in the Mormon Church ought to be punished, but the men who are not guilty of polygamy ought not to be treated as though they were guilty. If the property of the Mormon Church shall be taken from that church society and turned over to the public schools of Utah, or if it shall be in any other way taken out of the hands of the Mormons, the act will stand as a national reproach. Confiscation can never be justified, except it be as a last resort in the national defense. To say that the Mormons are so great a menace to the American government that the confiscation of their property is justified, is absurd.

## FREE SCHOOLS AND TUITION FEES

IN another column will be found a letter which has been sent to county superintendents by Jacob Bureman, the Territorial Commissioner of District Schools. It will be seen that this small person carries his littleness right along in every capacity in which he finds a field to operate.

He commences his epistle with carping complaints about the school law, coupled with petty objections which he does not fortify with proofs or instances, and which are just about what might be expected from a person of his mental calibre.

One thing he seems desirous of emphasizing, with the purpose, no doubt, of creating difficulty among trustees of different school districts, instead of endeavoring to promote harmony and unity of purpose for the benefit of the people and the cause of education, that is, the construction which he places on the section of the law in regard to tuition fees.

The law provides concerning the school board:

"Sec. 43. It shall have power to admit to the schools in the district, pupils from other districts, when it can be done without injuring and overcrowding such schools, and shall have power to make regulations for their admission, and to charge and collect reasonable fees for their tuition. It shall have power to arrange with the board of an adjacent district for sending to such district such pupils as can be conveniently taught therein, when for any cause such pupils cannot be conveniently taught in the district in which they reside, and for paying their tuition. It shall also have power to make proper and needful rules for the assignment and distribution of pupils to and among the schools in the district and their transfer from one school to another."

Now hear what the commissioner says:

"In endeavoring to reach correct interpretations of its different sections and provisions and to reconcile and harmonize the whole, it is necessary