DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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Thursday, - April 26, 1894

IN TO SEWAGE.

The subject of sewage may not be as interesting as some others, but it is very important; and the talk of the early completion of the system for this city will not fail to attract to the matter its full share of notice. Properly constructed and controlled, such a system should be a powerful safeguard against epidemics of various forms, but a system improperly handled would be almost sure to develop a terrible scourge. Salt Lake is not situated so as to have its sewage carried off by conveyances flowing stream to a safe distance or to lodge it in the ocean depths, though even the latter is not always satisfactory, for, as in the case of San Francisco, the health authorities now report that conveying the sewage into the bay there is a menace instead of a protection to the health of the city. It is asserted that the bacilli of disease are developed by the sea water, rise to the surface and are conveyed back by the winds, finding lodgment in the city, at some time destined to build forth in a dreadful plague.

An instance of a city where danger from this source is reduced to a minimum, is Berlin, Germany. The Germans have made a profound study of disease germs and their development, and the leading authorities of that country assert that Berlin is as near proof against epidemic as any large city can be, because of the manipulation of its system of carrying off and disposing of the sewage. Though the city is on a river, the latter is small and sluggish, and the system of sewage farms is regarded as far superior to carrying off the waste matter by any waterway; and the immunity of the city from epidemics at the most chosen visitation indicates that there is virtue in the sanitary precautions taken.

The city is divided into sewer districts, from which the sewage is pumped off on to land specially prepared for the purpose. One of the farms, the Blankenburg, contains 2,750 acres. The process of utilizing the sewage is simple and comparatively inexpensive, and consists chiefly of a system of irrigation by which the sewage is distributed over the land and plowed under for fertilizing purposes. The amount of material that has to be disposed of by burning is consequently very small. On the land are produced staple crops of oats, mustard, winter rape, winter and summer wheat and rye; oats, Indian corn, barley, buckwheat, peas, beans, clover, grasses, potatoes, beets, cabbage, chicory, etc. Land which formerly was of little value is thus rendered very productive, and it is estimated that the 10,000 acres of sewer farms thus yield a net profit of about $28.50 per acre per annum, and give support to nearly 30,000 people.

The objections which formerly were raised against the sewer farm project have been entirely swept away. The water of the neighborhood, which it was thought would be poisoned by the drainage from the irrigated farms is found to be not affected, and even an eminent authority as Dr. Koch asserts that by the farming process the bacteria is rendered innocuous and thus effectually disposed of. The stench which it was asserted would become unbearable has not fulfilled that prediction, and the fear that the air would become so impregnated with sewage matter that it would not pass has passed away, for the workers have been able to adapt their crops to the strength of the soil, and enhance it as fast as the city can restore it.

Of course Salt Lake needs only small sewer farms compared to those of Berlin, but the disparity between the cities is not anything like as great as the different proportions of the land utilized. Enough by all means, and even much more than enough, should be had, in order that all sewage may be properly taken care of, without occasioning any complaint from neighbors. And when this is accomplished the land could be made a fruitful source of income. But if there is too much cramping in size, the result will be not only a heavy expense to get rid of fecal material, but constant liability to sewage suits from neighbors who may feel aggrieved. There will be no more opportune time than the present for the municipality to investigate the subject thoroughly and secure or negotiate for needed lands while they are obtainable at reasonable prices. We need hardly say the News is opposed to any sensationalism in this matter. But suggestions on the subject seem to be timely, and they ought to bring about investigation and careful consideration of all present and prospective requirements.

YOU TAKE YOUR CHOICE.

It is amusing, and not altogether uninstructive, to listen to the explanations given by political sneakers and writers on either side, of the results of the local elections recently held in some of the northern and western states. These elections, it will be remembered, have almost universally shown immense Democratic and Populist losses, and corresponding Republican gains. This fact being undeniable, the argument which the non-partisan finds in the situation is furnished by the ingenious variety of reasons given for its existence.

Strangely enough, those who, it would naturally seem, should be concerned and disappointed by the result alluded to, only see in it an additional incentive to better progress along the line they have already marked out. Their courage is quite unshaken, their confidence wholly undiminished. The Democratic view, for instance, is that the political upheaval is unmistakably an expression of strong popular disapproval of Democratic delay in carrying out the pledges upon which the party was voted into full control of the government two years ago. The Republican view, on the other hand, is that the same upheaval signifies a sweeping change in popular sentiment since the general elections of 1892 upon the question of tariff reform, and that the voters of the country, having been converted from the error of their recent opinions, are now imparting a vigorous for the retention of the McKinley law as they declared in 1892 for a reduction of duties. Just how the Populists regard the situation and explain it, we are unable to say, as most with very few of them in this section, and have not very few Populist newspaper exchanges—in those which do come to hand, the discussion, like that of "Hard Hackle," seems to be to "Say low."

In view of the fact that the arguments on the sets of both the great parties are in favor of an adherence to the respective and antagonistic party policies, the independent voter will again be forced into the necessity of doing his own thinking in election affairs. The editor of Public Opinion seems to strike a happy medium of independent advice when he suggests that the institutional voter is for an alternative but to study the question at issue upon their merits and shape his own course without regard to existing factors. It would not be strange if the institutional voter should ask himself at this point what reason there is anyhow for allowing himself to be swayed by the course of any other voter or number of voters. His claim to the great political school room does not appear to be increasing in numbers very fast, but it is usually respectable and always more or less influential; and in these recent events there is nothing that it ought to regard as discouraging.

SENATOR PEFFER'S PLAN.

Only a few days more and our national legislators and government officials will have to deal with the industrial army problem in some practical way. It is supposed that about 50,000 men from all parts of the country are now converging upon Washington and the advance columns are already outside the gates of the capital. But little, so far, is known of what measures have been adopted for possible emergencies. There seems to be a general disposition to allow the crusaders full liberty to present their petitions to Congress and to go and come unmolested as long as they commit no acts of lawlessness. President Cleveland's semi-official proclamation, issued after consultation with cabinet members, and warning all lawless visitors to the capital to respect the laws to be prepared to take the consequences, is a fair expression of the general sentiment on the subject in Washington.

This course will be regarded as wise and will meet approval throughout the country, but it will not satisfy the petitioners, who come not for consultations alone. Senator Peffer, according to the reports, is almost the only one who is endeavoring to find some means of meeting the immediate demands of the industrials. He proposes that Congress appropriate $1,000,000 to be expended for the improvement of the public grounds of Washington, by laying out and making walks and wagon ways and by opening up highways wherever needed in the District. He adds that the wages are to be fixed at $1.50 a day and the time of labor at eight hours.

As this measure is intended to meet an emergency in which good advice is precious because conspicuously scarce, it may perhaps not be timely to criticise it too closely. But it is certainly only a palliative, and nobody should be allowed to harbor the illusion that its adoption would cure the malady for which it is applied. In the first place it may be asked, whether Congress has the right to take a million dollars from the country's treasury and distribute it among men who say they are out of work. Is that what is expected of our legislators? But granting them such a prerogative how long would a million dollars last among say 50,000 men at $1.50 a day? It would carry them just about one month, giving each man $6 and at the end of the month, when the expense for living were paid, they would be ready to form another industrial army and demand another million, ostensibly at the expense of the Washington who have no gratuitous employment. How long would the rest of the people stand an experiment of this kind? If Mr. Kelsey's solution has to be applied by Congress, as Senator Peffer proposes, it must be extended to every laborer in the country, or the Congress of the United States is not as yet constituted for that purpose.

It would seem, if labor must be provided by the State for the unemployed that some scheme must be devised whereby that labor is made remunerative to the State, and thereby lessen the burden of taxation. It would never do to think of increasing taxes for any such purpose. The work proposed by the Populist senator is of the latter kind; it would simply entail an extra outlay of a million dollars at a time when the people can ill afford it. It would have been less surprising if the senator from Kansas had recommended for our country to follow for the benefit of the "industrials" the example of the European monarchies in adopting a socialist policy. If the government is to be the employment bureau without employing socialistic principles, that seems to be about the only recourse open at present.

Now, just not for calculations to composing contests, with frequent visits to the weighing scales, by those who expect to find proof of their correctness in proportions a medical paper says that to be perfectly proportioned a man should weigh 19 pounds for every inch of his height, or 114 pounds for every foot.

It is unfortunate that the pioneer regiment of the "Coxey army in reserve," just organized in Denver, should have for its accoutrements a man named Crosby for the stay-at-home part of the Coxey army is the most sensible part of it.

A SINGLE incident in coiffeur Illinois gave her local newspaper that to expose her feelings for her "Miss Emma Crosby" wishes to return her heartfelt thanks to the friends who so kindly assisted in the death of her husband."

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