

and the mandamus decision of Judge Zane.

Every one of the registrars ought, on the showing made, to have been removed. They were all proven guilty of discrimination intolerable in officers performing their functions, and it was not even denied by them that they had usurped powers belonging only to courts. In refusing to dismiss any of them the Commission has virtually endorsed the conduct of all of them.

#### SOUTHERN UTAH NOTES.

Railroading has started in earnest at Milford. Several train loads of outfits have arrived, and are being strung out over the proposed route. In Milford it is almost impossible to get a man, as the boarding houses are overrun. There is a splendid opening there for a restaurant.

Contracts on the railroad are being let to private parties. Darrin & Son, of Minersville, have a contract for clearing the brush off for quite a long distance, and have a large force of men out at work.

The roads in the south are in a fearful condition, making it almost impossible to take loads over them.

The heavy rains have caused floods in Washington County that have produced a great amount of damage, taking out all the irrigation dams and bridges on the Virgin River. This will cost the people of that region at least twenty-five thousand dollars, and will prove a serious and almost irreparable loss, as they are now in poverty owing to the many difficulties they have had to meet.

More rain has fallen in Southern Utah this season than ever before in the same length of time since the region was settled.

Many large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle from the north have sought range in the south this season, and the late heavy downfall will greatly help the range.

Business has been and is very dull, but a market for a small portion of the farmer's products has opened at Pioche and the railroad will help them still more.

The heavy rains have greatly injured the road south of Kanab, and between there and St. George.

Dec. 24, 1889. R. G. L.

#### MALAD STAKE CONFERENCE.

The quarterly conference of this Stake was held at West Portage on Sunday and Monday, Dec. 15th and 16th. There were present on the stand of the local authorities President O. C. Hoskins, Counselor W. A. Gibbs, a majority of the High Council and Bishops. Notwithstanding the unfavorable weather the attendance was good, and the exhortations and instructions were excellent. The reports of the Bishops showed that the Saints, as a rule, are becoming more united. The Relief Societies and Sunday schools were represented by their respective Stake presidencies as being well attended. President O. C. Hoskins and Counselor W. H. Gibbs dwelt upon the practical duties of

the Saints, and other subjects of interest tending to better the condition of the Stake.

A meeting of the Y. M. M. I. A. was held on Sunday evening. Much valuable instruction was given by the young men.

LORENZO HUNSAKER,  
Clerk pro tem.

#### RARE VIOLINS.

The mention of a Stradivarius fiddle has always an irresistible fascination for musicians, professional or amateur. Professional collectors have scoured Europe for them, and probably the whereabouts of every Stradivarius extant is known to the dealers. A considerable proportion of them is to be found in England. Antonio Stradivarius, who was born in 1644 and died in 1737, worked quietly on for over sixty years of his life. Taking it as a moderate estimate that he turned out one violin a week—in those days men worked more leisurely than they do in this age of stress and worry—we should have a total of over 3000 of these instruments from his hands.

Of these how many are in existence today? Opinions differ. Mr. Nachez recently put the number at eighty. Mr. Hill, the well known connoisseur, believes that there are no fewer than 1000 of these violins still left. The rise in their value has in recent times been enormous. Twenty or thirty years ago a "Strad" in good condition might have been acquired in the open market at prices ranging from £300 to £600. Now the case is altered. An instrument of the maker's better period in a fair state of preservation could not be had probably for £1000, whereas for the finest specimens extant extraordinary prices are demanded. The largest sum actually paid for a "Strad" is, we believe, £1400. The next highest is £1200, which was paid for the viola chosen from the collection of M. Labitte of Paris for the Jubilee presentation last year to Dr. Joachim by his English admirers. By this gift Dr. Joachim became the happy possessor of three Stradivarius fiddles. Who so fitted to own them as the greatest violin player of the age? Mr. Sarasate possesses, it is understood, two instruments by the same maker, both of great value, while several other of our leading violinists are almost equally blessed.

There is now in the market another magnificent Stradivarius in a most perfect state of preservation. It may at present be seen at Mr. Hill's in New Bond Street. Of its authenticity there appears to be no doubt. It was bought in 1794 in Italy for £25 by an Irish gentleman, who took it home and then seems to have forgotten all about it. At any rate it was lost sight of till 1845, when (most of these instruments have their romance) it narrowly escaped destruction in a fire. It was discovered among the chattels rescued from the burning house, and subsequently met with all the honors it deserved. To its long period of obscurity its admirable state of preservation—it is without a flaw of any kind—is,

of course, due. The sight of it now as it reposes beneath its glass case, illuminated at night by the electric light, must stir the heart of the connoisseur. But it can only pass into the possession of a man of ample means, or an enthusiast of the first order, who would deem no sacrifice too great to become its owner. The price asked for it is \$2000.

The sum appears enormous, it is true; but even larger prices have been heard of. The Joachim Jubilee Committee were, it is said, asked £2500 for a "Strad" which they were desirous of presenting to the master, and, incredible as it may be, it is understood that a leading artist has an instrument by the same great maker which he values, with the partiality perhaps of an owner and enthusiast, at £4000. Poor old Stradivarius was happy to get £5 each for his fiddles, and by his fellow-makers was looked upon as wealthy. It is said that a number of his instruments were sent in his day to England for disposal, but were returned unsold, so much as £5 not being obtainable for a violincello.—*St. James' Gazette.*

#### OPIUM IN CHINA.

The Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs has just issued a small pamphlet entitled, "Opium: Historical Notes," or, "The Poppy in China," by Dr. Elkins, the well-known scholar and missionary of Peking. The importance of the little work is that it demolishes the proposition sedulously propagated of late years in this country that opium was introduced in recent years from India to China.

Dr. Edkins says that in fact the Arabs took it to that country in the eighth century, at a time when there was a flourishing trade between Canton and the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian gulf. The medicinal properties of the drug are mentioned in a work published in the tenth century. From this time it was cultivated for these properties, and from the fifteenth century "is appears that the manufacture of native opium has existed in China, and it is not only in recent years that there has been both native and foreign opium in this country." The smoking of opium came in with the smoking of tobacco in the seventeenth century.

Various ingredients, says Dr. Edkins, were in various countries mixed with tobacco to try their effect, among them being opium. The Manchus tried to prohibit the use of tobacco by edicts as stringent as those issued against opium, but in vain. Among the causes of this failure the writer includes the love of opium smoking by many in high positions—court favorites and others—whom it would be very difficult to punish. Opium smoking began in Formosa and Amoy, where tobacco smoking was first introduced. The first edict against the practice was in 1729. Opium was a common product in Yunnan in 1736, and in those days this distant province was far remote from the influence of any foreign country whatever, except Burmah.—*London Times.*