

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

THAT OGDEN PETITION.

There is one thing which, in the dignity of their important office, legislators cannot afford to do, and that is to give way to anger at any petition which may be presented from the people of any locality. In an official capacity the Legislature is the controlling body in State affairs, and in considering anything of a public nature no member should lose his self-control. Especially should each member refrain from taking to himself personally that which is addressed to the whole body; his own feelings should be subservient to the duty demanded of him in a representative capacity wherein, in his exalted position, he is required to perform the labors of office "with charity toward all, malice toward none"—not even the malice that may be awakened by an address not altogether in proper form. An efficient legislator seldom fails to remember that "a soft answer turneth away wrath," and that he is under obligations to follow this rule when any part of his own or his fellow member's constituency is moved to severe criticism, provoked or otherwise.

No doubt there was in the petition of Ogden citizens, presented to the Senate on Thursday, something to awaken the wrath of an individual not given to maintaining a steady control over his temper; but there was nothing in it to cause a dignified, conservative body, like the Senate of a great State should be, to fly into a passion, and indulge in threats of violence on the ifs and buts of the matter. The responsible character of the signers was in itself a guarantee that, however inappropriate their choice of language might have been, disrespect or insult was not intended. The signers are reputable, prominent citizens, of whom it is well known that they do not go about insulting individuals or representative bodies of the people, albeit some of them may be a little brusque and plain in their manner of expression. The explanation of the personnel of the signers, made before the Senate discussion was entered upon, should have precluded any individual expression of anger; and the Senate did well when, in response to the suggestions of the Utah and Weber county members, it referred the whole business to a committee of inquiry.

As to the petition itself, it is the expression of an idea that prevails largely in other parts of the State than Ogden, and among a large proportion of the people. Its application to the Legislature was not in good taste; and the signers should withdraw it with an apology for having directed it toward the wrong parties, in consequence of a mistaken notion as to who are responsible for the evils complained of. It is true that there are before the State Legislature propositions for the creation of a long list of offices, longer perhaps than many of the members realize; but it is equally true that the prospect is very much against the Legislature consenting to such crea-

tion. As a rule the State Senators and Representatives are possessed of a true and sincere desire to enhance the welfare of the State, hence the insinuations of the petition, made knowingly, would be wholly unjustifiable; and if, after explanation and due consideration, the petitioners should insist on holding the position they have assumed, a scathing rebuke would be fully deserved on their part.

But there is some justification for the expressions contained in the petition, and for others of a still more severe character, although the State Legislature is not the body at which they should be directed. The evil complained of was committed before the State came into existence, and while the Territorial Legislatures may be in some degree responsible and subject to criticism, it is only to the extent that they allowed smaller bodies power to commit the wrong protested against. In Ogden, as in other places, county as well as city, the making of offices for office seekers, and the institution of high taxes and attendant evils has been largely the work of those in local control, and not of those in charge of the State's affairs. It is so in Salt Lake, and the Ogden petitioners will find it the same in Weber county if they will do a little investigating and figuring. When they do this, we believe they will see that their address to the State Legislature was wholly wrong, and honorable amends should be made therefor. If they want the evils corrected they should ask the Legislature to restrict the powers of those corporate bodies which have done the mischief; and in this they will have the active sympathy of taxpayers in every large municipality or populous county of the State. Up to the present, the majority of the legislature have given evidence of a determination to keep down expenses and to give the State wise and conservative legislation. Petitions ought to be directed to aid in the work thus so well begun, and not to lampooning members for the faults of somebody else who is perhaps nearer at home to the petitioners themselves.

THE BEAR RIVER CANAL SCHEME.

"The Bear River Irrigation System, Utah," furnishes material for an elaborate article in the Engineering News and Railway Journal, the first installment of which is published in the issue for Feb. 9. The paper is by W. P. Hardesty, C. E., and is copiously illustrated with views of the dam in Bear river at the head of the canyon, also of the tunnel entrance on the main canal, headgates, etc., etc., cross and longitudinal sections and part elevation of the dam and gates, and a general map of the country. The descriptive matter is very explicit and somewhat technical in its terms, but probably no more so than the readers of Engineering News would desire. It contains many suggestions of value and importance to those contemplating future irrigation works under similar

conditions, and supplies experiences from which even much smaller systems may derive profit. On the matter of side-hill ditches, we quote a paragraph:

During the first season much care had to be used on the canal on the steep hill-sides below the canyon. Several slides occurred, and on the night of July 3 over 20,000 cubic yards of earth slipped down into Bear river. Portions of this slide moved over 800 feet horizontally by 100 feet vertically. The most effective method tried by Chief Engineer Fortler in preventing slides was to procure cattle and horses (sheep could not be had at that time), and after the bottom of the canal was moistened the animals were driven back and forth over the same for hundreds of times. A mixture of puddled clay and gravel was then placed by hand near the bottom of the slopes and the water turned in. No more trouble was had with portions so treacherous.

Further quotations from Prof. Hardesty's article may properly include a brief history and the purposes of the mammoth enterprise he describes:

The Bear River canal system is designed to irrigate the delta valley or plain of Bear river, located in northern Utah, on the northeastern side of Great Salt Lake. The river cuts through the range of mountains on the line between Box Elder and Cache counties, by a narrow canyon and flows south through Box Elder county, discharging into Great Salt Lake. The valley is traversed by two railways, the Utah & Northern, which runs along the east side, and the Central Pacific, which traverses the southeast and south parts. The source of the Bear river is in the Uintah mountains, about 50 miles east of Salt Lake City, but it has a long and tortuous course, first north into Wyoming, then back into Utah again, then back into Wyoming and on through southeastern Idaho, forming here a half circle and returning nearly directly south through Utah to the Lake. It is an exceptionally well fed stream, having a drainage area of 6,000 square miles. It flows through the great Bear Lake, lying in Utah and Idaho, and this tends to equalize the flow, acting as a reserve for maintaining the volume during the low water period. A U. S. geological survey gauging station has been established at the mouth of the canyon since June, 1889. Following is the average monthly flow at the same from June, 1889, to the end of 1892:

	Cu. ft. per sec.
January.....	1,234
February.....	1,172
March.....	2,430
April.....	3,380
May.....	5,454
June.....	4,022
July.....	2,053
August.....	1,076
September.....	960
October.....	1,160
November.....	1,175
December.....	1,262

This gives an average flow of over 2,100 sec. feet, and it is seen that the supply is well kept up in the three irrigation months of May, June and July, when water is most in demand. Surveys have shown that by a low dam a few hundred feet in length Bear Lake can be greatly increased in capacity, and made to store a supply for the low-water period.

The delta plain before spoken of contains some 200,000 acres of excellent arable land, which needed only water to make it highly productive and valuable. Prior to 1889 no attempt had been made to use the water of the river to any extent for this irrigation, for the reason that the river, after its descent from the canyon, lies in a deep gash cut in the plains, with little fall, making it impossible to get water out to the plains unless taken.