

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

SPRAYING TREES.

The bill which has been introduced in the House to repeal the present law providing for the spraying of trees is an ill-advised measure. The sentiment it expresses is one that favors sitting supinely down while the orchards and fruit interests of the State go to utter ruin.

It is more than possible that the spraying law is not what it ought to be; that it is defective in the machinery which it provides for its own enforcement, and that it fails to cover the subject sufficiently. If this is true, amend it. Embrace within its provisions the highest scientific knowledge attainable respecting horticulture in our State, and the most effective means possible for the execution of those provisions.

Nature has given Utah both climate and soil that are magnificently adapted to fruit culture in great variety, and if man will bestir himself and do his part, that industry can be made to produce food and revenue in enormous quantities. But it will require industry, persistence and intelligence to overcome the insect pests that so long have produced discouragement to the owners of fruit trees.

The Legislature should refuse to listen for a moment to any suggestion of retreat in this matter. The present spraying law was a step in the right direction. It has many intelligent, observing friends in all parts of the State, who firmly believe in the benefit derived from spraying fruit trees in a proper manner and at the right time. Perfect the law, but don't repeal it!

SUGAR BEETS AND FARMERS.

Fortune-making among working people is not an easy thing nowadays, when all industrial pursuits seem to be crowded to a minimum in the profits they yield. So neither the mechanic nor the agriculturist may expect very rich returns from his efforts. But that the sugar beet raisers this year have received a fair recompense for their labors, under existing conditions, is shown in connection with the proceedings at the Lehi sugar factory, which now is on its last week's run for this season. The Lehi Banner, giving the best report for 1896, presents an interesting table of the quantity received at the factory and the localities where the beets were raised, and remarks concerning Lehi and Springville, which led in production, that "no delinquent tax list was published in either city." The farmers of Lehi alone received nearly \$40,000 for their beets. None can dispute that the sugar factory, in the large amount of capital it has kept working at home, the vast sum it has paid out to farmers and employees, and the amount it has been a direct and indirect cause of contributing to the public revenue, has been of great benefit to its immediate locality and to the State at large. Its record in these matters ought to be an incentive

to renewed patriotism in sustaining and investing in other industries generally, that the State might enjoy the improvement necessarily attending such a policy. The report of sugar beets raised for and taken by the factory in the 1896 season will be interesting for reference in the record of home institutions. Here it is:

Towns.	Car Loads.	Factory Weight.
Lovendahl.....	126	4,561,264
West Jordan.....	211	8,531,422
Riverton.....	80	3,379,532
Pleasant Grove.....	71	2,793,971
Lake View.....	84	3,508,507
Provo.....	86	3,614,018
Springville.....	338	14,600,074
Mapleton.....	208	9,221,193
Spanish Fork.....	156	6,090,805
Benjamin.....	70	2,674,123
Payson.....	124	4,837,141
Lehi farmers.....		18,269,420
Utah Sugar Co.....		4,832,450
		86,406,031

COINAGE QUESTION AGAIN.

Judge J. M. Washburn, in the Philadelphia American, presents the silver coinage question in a way that is not often considered by the people. He holds that between the free coinage of silver and its limited coinage the late election settled nothing, and could not settle it. His argument presents the view, in a clear, logical manner, that only the United States Supreme court can settle it in the present situation, and he insists that the way to proceed is for some citizen to demand of the officer of the mint to coin into money, at the present ratio of 16 to 1, any silver such citizen may possess; and if the officer of the mint refuses to accede to the demand to apply to the federal court for a writ of mandate, which Judge Washburn says must be granted in conformity with the Constitution of the United States.

Of course this proposition involves the validity of the law of 1873, by which Congress refused to coin silver in an unlimited manner; and this is where Judge Washburn says the question can be decided. He claims, and makes a strong showing in support of his claim, that if the question of the validity of the law of 1873 were to be tested in the Supreme court on the point of its limitation of silver coinage, that law would be declared void. He says:

The question as to the coinage of gold and silver needs only to be brought before the Supreme court, to be set forever at rest. There is no shadow of doubt as to how the court will decide the question. It will be wise to have such a decision, as it will finally settle the question, will quiet the excited condition of the country, and give the country the gold and silver money intended by the Constitution.

In discussing the proposition of the invalidity of the law of 1873, should it be brought before the Supreme Court, he takes the position that the Constitution commands Congress to coin money; that at the date of the Constitution the money of the country was all foreign coins of gold and silver, and the country was bankrupt; that there is no doubt of

the intention of the Constitution that Congress should coin all the gold and silver the country could obtain, and that such coins are tender in payment of debts. Accordingly, he says, a law refusing to coin silver or limiting its coinage is violative of the Constitution; any law of Congress saying that either gold or silver shall not be coined, or saying that either gold or silver coin of the United States shall not be tender in payment of debts, is violative of the Constitution. Hence, he holds that if a test case were to be brought, the Supreme court would have no alternative but to declare that, "without condition or shadow of doubt, the act of February 12, 1873, refusing coinage, in any manner, to silver, is a violation of the Constitution." He says:

It is impossible for the Supreme court not to hold that the Constitution obliges Congress to coin all the gold and silver the mines of the country will produce. It is plain that the Constitution obliges Congress to coin silver. Will that court say the Constitution does not so oblige Congress? The Constitution does not limit the amount of silver Congress shall coin. Will that court say that Congress may change the Constitution so as to limit the amount of silver it will coin? The Constitution makes both gold and silver coin tender in payment of debts. Will that court decide that Congress may destroy the tender of silver coins, and retain the tender of gold coins? Will that court decide that Congress may discriminate and allow gold to be coined to an unlimited extent and silver only to a limited extent? The principle in such a decision would allow Congress to abolish the Supreme court.

Therefore Judge Washburn thinks the agitation about unlimited coinage of silver is a waste of effort as applied to action by the voters. If silver men want unlimited coinage they have the same remedy that is open to all citizens when injured by a law of Congress in violation of the Constitution, that is, to invoke a decision of the Supreme court declaring the law to be unconstitutional. This would settle the question of limitation of coinage.

As to the standard, or unit of money, or ratio, he takes the stand that the Constitution does not fix that. It is left to Congress to make "the unit"—to "regulate the value of the money" it must coin. Hence the standard, the unit, or the ratio, is left entirely to Congress, and is a political question to be voted on by the people—a question of policy and political economy, in no respect judicial. With the first settled, as the judge says could be done quickly and easily in favor of the silver men, Congress would be compelled to either change the ratio or to let it go at the present standard of 16 to 1; but in either event there would be the free and unlimited coinage of gold and silver of the mines of this country.

PREST. WOODRUFF'S BIRTHDAY.

On Monday, the first day of March next, President Wilford Woodruff will be ninety years old, and this announcement will thrill with enthusiasm and gratitude the hearts of tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints, in all the world, to whom his life is precious beyond price.