

THE DESERET WEEKLY,

PUBLISHED BY
THE DESERET NEWS COMPANY.
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
Per Year, of Fifty-two Numbers, \$2.50
Per Volume, of Twenty-six Numbers, . . . 1.50
IN ADVANCE

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Saturday, . . . February 6, 1892.

THE NEW CITY CHARTER.

THE Municipal bill, about which so much has been said, was introduced in the Legislature today. It is a voluminous document and bears evidence throughout of careful and able preparation. We have not time or space to comment upon it at any length, but we will give an epitome of the changes which it contemplates in our city government:

It is a general act for the incorporation and government of metropolitan cities in this Territory. All cities are to be deemed metropolitan which have a population of 40,000 or more. They are to be each divided into twelve municipal wards. At present this, of course, only affects Salt Lake City.

The City Council is to be composed of two houses—a Board of Delegates consisting of twelve members, one from each municipal ward, elected by the qualified voters thereof, and a Board of Aldermen consisting of six members, one from each district composed of two contiguous wards, elected by the qualified voters of the district. They are to serve for two years at an annual salary of \$300. Each house is to elect its own President. The elections are to occur on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each year, commencing in 1892, but are so arranged that after the first election, that for the Aldermen will occur in the even years, and that for the Delegates and other officers in the odd years.

The two houses of the Council are not to meet on the same week. Every measure must receive a majority vote of each separate house. Thus no ordinance can be passed in a rush, but the members and the public will have at least a week to consider anything proposed. Two days must intervene between meetings of the two houses in case of a special session. The Mayor is not an officer of either house and has no vote therein, but has the power of limited veto which may be overcome by a two-thirds vote of both houses.

The powers of the City Council are somewhat enlarged, comprehending all those now exercised here and in

the Denver municipality. No saloon is to be permitted within 200 feet of a church or school house, no females are to be allowed as waiters, other proper restrictions are imposed, and a liquor license may be revoked when necessary after a fair investigation.

The Mayor is made the chief executive officer with a salary of three thousand dollars a year. The other executives are, a Board of Public Works, a Fire and Police Board, each composed of three persons, one of whom shall be of a different party from that of the Mayor, a Treasurer, Auditor, Clerk, Attorney, Engineer, Street Commissioner and Water Commissioner. All are to hold office for two years. The Mayor, Treasurer and Clerk are to be elected by the votes of the city at large, the other officers named are to be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Aldermen. They may be removed for cause under proper restrictions as to investigation.

The judicial department consists of a Justice of the Peace for the city, elected by the voters at large, who will have exclusive jurisdiction of all cases arising under the city ordinances. This will leave the precinct Justices to act under the laws of the Territory and leave each department to its proper sphere.

The city finances are limited in this way: The tax for contingent expenses is not to exceed five mills on the dollar; not to exceed three mills for opening and improving streets; not to exceed five mills for procuring water for the city; not to exceed three mills for sewers and drains. This is a reduction instead of an increase as represented in the "Liberal" organ, which raises a false alarm. The maximum now for opening and improving streets is five mills, for procuring water ten mills, for sewers five mills. Therefore instead of raising the possible percentage, the bill reduces it nine mills on the dollar. Paving and sewerage, as now, is to be met by local assessments. Sewers are public, district or private. The main sewers are public, to be paid for out of the treasury, the others by the present method.

In protesting against a local assessment the measurement of foot frontage of property is to be considered instead of the assessed value. So that if the owners of a majority of the foot frontage object to the assessment it will not prevail. This is more just and equitable than the present arrangement.

No grade for streets or sidewalks can be changed without the consent of two-thirds of the frontage owners.

The treasurer may select a depository for city funds, but interest is to be required of the banker and a bond in the sum of \$200,000.

The office of City Assessor and Collector is to be abolished. The County Assessor is to make a special column of the property within the city limits, the County Clerk is to designate the amounts on the tax list, and the County Collector is to collect all city and local taxes. Thus the taxpayer will receive his demand for all taxes of every description on one notice, and there will be no difference of valuation for one tax more than for another.

No bonded indebtedness can be entered into without the consent of a majority of the legal voters. All money for public improvements is to be expended by the Board of Public Works, which will have exclusive control of the water works department and appoint the necessary officers and workmen.

The Fire and Police Board will regulate both these departments, appoint the Chief, assistant chiefs, fire wardens and other employees of the fire department. Also Chief of Police, necessary captains and other officers and patrolmen of the police department, and remove them for proper cause. The office of City Marshal is thus abolished. A Police Matron is to be appointed, with such assistants as may be necessary, which is an excellent improvement, for the benefit of arrested women and children.

A Board of Health is to be appointed, with power to abate nuisances and to regulate all matters relating to the sanitary condition of the city.

Provisions are made to fill vacancies, to prescribe the duties of the various departments and officers mentioned in this synopsis, and for the general welfare of the city. If the bill passes in its present form as to elections, either the present incumbents of the city offices will hold over until the 1st day of January, 1893, or the officers elected in February of this year will hold their offices only until that date.

We consider the general scope and provisions of the measure excellent. The extra expense of the changes involved is but small in comparison with the advantages to be derived, and we think the bill will be recognized by the majority of the legislators as possessing unusual merits.

The committee that prepared it are to be commended for their work. It consists of the Mayor, City Attorney, five members of the City Council and five members of the Chamber of Commerce. They engaged the services of Hon. F. S. Richards, who has devoted his