DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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[illegible] January 15, 1895.

ON SCHOOL MATTERS.

This communication has been received from James H. Ballard, of Grafton, Utah:

Editor Deseret News:

If it is not asking too much, would you be so kind as to answer the following questions in regard to our new school law:

1. In Sec. 70 it reads thus: "No school district shall receive any apportionment of school money, unless such district shall have maintained a school therein for a term equal to one-half of the term preceding such year." Now, does the last sentence of the paragraph limit to maintain a school or the length of time that a district is entitled when the apportionment is made? Some districts are enlarged, the people from three miles and upward, and neither have the required length of time in their own district.

2. Will the law permit with districts in Beaver's school district, which adjoins the town, are only about one-half the population in which, consequently, not equal contract in light, for to pay a teacher, you would not pay equal length of time, we have had to pay for a teacher of 3 weeks and two months, while in town it can be nearly four months for another.

While we are thus situated there are districts on both sides of us that can finish enough to maintain their school the required length of time.

From the foregoing, I do not wish it understood that I am an friend to education, but there is no one of the board takes a greater stand for the cause of education than I would.

We are supposed to comply with a code of school law, made at the meeting of books, the superintendent of a religious teacher and being compelled to send children between certain ages or fined for not doing so.

Now it looks as though, if the law compels us to do these things, that it ought to assist us out with funds to maintain our schools, and not because we are a small district leave us out in the cold to take care of ourselves the best that we can.

As to the first question: The law contemplates furnishing the funds to maintain a school in each district for the length of time stated; but it does not contemplate that the apportionment named in that part of the law quoted is the only available fund for the purpose. The law intends that when the apportionment for such district is exhausted the owners of taxable property shall open their purses and maintain the school the requires length of time.

For a further explanation it may be stated that there are three tax funds from which to draw for the expense of supporting and maintaining public schools. These are (1) the Territorial levy; (2) the county levy; and (3) the school district levy. The Territorial levy create a fund which is apportioned by the Territorial commissioner of schools; the county fund of the same character is apportioned by the county superintendent. The distribution is based upon the number of school children residing in each district; and if the district trustees do not keep a school twenty weeks in the year for the benefit of the children referred to, no distribution is made to the district. That is the apportionment mentioned in section 70, quoted by our correspondent. The other fund to be drawn on is an wholly under the control of the trustees, and is provided for in section 33 of the school law, where the trustees are empowered to raise "on the taxable property of the district, one-fourth of one per cent for the support of schools, and to defray current expenses." This latter fund is the one referred to when we say the owners of taxable property are required to open their purses to maintain the schools. They do so in the case of the other funds as well, but is an extra out of the taxpayers' pockets.

Coming to the second interrogation: The law directs (section 29) that the trustees "shall organize, maintain and conveniently locate schools for the education of the children of school age within the district, or change or discontinue any of them according to law." The change referred to relates to the rearrangement of districts, and the discontinuance of schools where the average attendance of pupils is less than eight for twenty consecutive days. In all other cases it is provided (section 40) that "every district school shall be kept in session not less than two terms in each school year," that is, twenty weeks. This is about as near compelling the maintenance of a school or that length of time as can be well done under existing circumstances, the penalty for failure to comply is to deprive the district of the apportionment of Territorial and county school money. But the failure to keep school is rarely chargeable to the law not furnishing the funds, since if the owners of small school districts be unable in addition to the apportionment referred to, there probably is no school district sufficiently large to be entitled to that independent distribution which would not then have plenty of funds to run school full time.

This answers all the questions in one of our correspondents. His statement of the advantages claimed on behalf of the Territorial and county apportionment to the outside the regular school districts, and the means thereby, to aid school a suggestion to our trustee friends as to how they can receive equally well served. It is the cheap way we know of, and that they can much better afford than many others which might be named. There is a large number of people, especially in small districts in the country, who fancy that in the larger cities the schools are maintained out of the general fund appropriated by Territorial and county school officers. This is a very great mistake. As a matter of fact, the city school districts are much more heavily burdened than those in the country, and the extra cost necessitated by our Grafton correspondent as accruing to people in his district for school maintenance would be regarded by city taxpayers as a comparative Eldorado, if at that price they could secure the educational facilities now enjoyed. The school taxation all around is proportionately more heavier in the city school districts in Salt Lake City than in the country districts.

In comparison with the immediate neighbors, however, Grafton seems to be suffering as hardship, and in calling attention to the fact our correspondent certainly should not be deemed antagonistic to education. He is merely pointing out a situation that should be changed so that all in the country can be treated alike, or that should be understood as the best that can be done, as people may bear it cheerfully. The county court might give relief in one direction, as the school trustees do in the other, by consolidating Grafton with some district more favored in the way of school population, if that should be deemed advisable, as it might be if the district is unable, by the time funds which the law provides, to meet necessary expenses.

TURKS AND CHRISTIANS.

Agitation on account of the Armenian outrages is still carried on both in Europe and in this country. The Turkish government has taken great pains endeavoring to create an impression that the massacre was necessary for the suppression of rebellion, and that the affair was greatly exaggerated. It is but natural that the government now under the control of the civilized world should make every effort to throw the blame somewhere else.

The affairs in Armenia, however, are too much of the same character as those of Bulgaria, still within fresh memory of most of us. The terrible outrages in that country in 1876 were treated much in the same way, and yet on investigation every detail was more than corroborated.

Concerning those events the American consul general at Philippopolis reported to the United States minister at Constantinople as follows:

PHILIPPOPOLIS, August 15, 1876.

SIR—In reference to the atrocities and massacres committed by the Turks in Bulgaria, I have the honor to inform you that I have visited the towns of Adrianople, Philippopolis and Tatar Bazardjik and villages in the surrounding districts. From what I have personally seen and from the inquiries I have made and the information I have received, I have ascertained the following facts:

"During the last winter and spring agents of the Bulgarian Committee at Bucharest made an agitation in Bulgaria for an insurrection against the Turkish government, and met with considerable encouragement among the younger part of the population.

"Owing to the betrayal of the plot, the insurrection was not premature, for it was to take place on the first and second of May in some of the villages. The Beys of Adrianople and Philippopolis practically seized on the government and armed the Mussulman inhabitants of the town and of the country, arms being sent for that purpose from Constantinople. These armed Mussulmans, called bashi-bazouks, were then, together with the five regular troops at hand, sent into a campaign against the Bulgarian villages, for the purpose of putting down the insurrection and of deterring the Christian population. It was a crusade against the Mussulman villages against their Christian neighbors.

"The besieged villages made little or no resistance, in most instances they surrendered their arms upon the first demand. Nearly all the villages whose ways marked by the bashi-bazouks were burned and pillaged, as were also all those which had been abandoned by the terrified inhabitants. The inhabitants of most villages were massacred after satisfaction of the most frightful atrocity, the victims being women and girls, but even of persons of the other sex. These crimes were committed by the regular troops as well as by the bashi-bazouks. In a number of villages which were burned in whole or in part, in the districts of Philippopolis, Hopsitsa and Tatar Bazardjik, is at least sixty-five.

"Particular attention was given by the troops to the churches and schools, which in some cases were destroyed with gunpowder and dynamite.

"It is difficult to determine the number of Bulgarians who were killed during the few days that the disturbances lasted, but I am inclined to put down as the number for the districts I have named.

"A few details gathered on the spot will serve to show how the troops did their work.

"In Perapedna the church was plundered and some 100 of the unarmed inhabitants were killed—some of them women and children. Some women were ripped up and children were cast into the flames. In Batak, a village of 1,500 inhabitants, 5 miles from Perapedna, the church was burned with 200 women and children who had taken refuge in it. Some of the women were first violated by the troops and then cut to pieces with sabres. In the village of Batak I saw a young woman with her throat cut, her infant child lying by her side, murdered by a Mussulman.

"Although Batak was one of the most outrageous, the other villages I have mentioned have suffered almost equally with it. I have personally seen and verified the facts in the villages of Perapedna and Batak, and have received reliable information as to the rest, and have no reason to doubt the correctness of the information received.

"There are no full facts without a little exaggeration, and there can be no doubt that what the Turkish bashi-bazouks in Europe were capable of doing in Asia, the Kurds are capable of repeating in this character for another generation.

"The fact of the matter is that irregular troops called the Turkish rule, such as it is, may be to a Mussulman subject who respects in the Koran the sacrament of their prophet, to Christian subjects it is and always has been a curse. The two elements are not to be assimilated. There did not ever exist one, and there is no remedy for it, which a separation has taken place and the Christian element has attained some form of autonomy under the protection of Christian powers. This is the only solution of the Turkish question, and one that probably will commend itself finally to the judgment of the statesmen of the world.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

The proceedings of the American Protective association in the case of Thomas H. Carter, in Montana, develop a genuine case of religious persecution in a most dangerous form. Mr. Carter is a candidate for United States senator, and there appears a probability of his election by the Montana legislature. He is a man of recognized ability and probity. But he is a Catholic. Because of this latter fact, J. P. Caldwell, president of the A. P. A. in the state, wrote a letter to the legislature, protesting against Mr. Carter's election, and warning the members of the assembly, in the name of the A. P. A., "not to elect any man who may bear the slightest suspicion of owing any allegiance to any ecclesiastical power whatever." This is accompanied with the threat that every legislator who votes for a Catholic for the Senate will sound his political death-knell. Attention is called to the fact that in Montana only three Catholics were elected to "seats in the halls of our state" at the last election, and in referring to the pope, mention is made of "his miserable security in circling to free American citizens what they shall do and what they shall not do."

When Caldwell's letter was being read in the house of representatives yesterday (Jan. 14th), a motion was carried to send the communication back to the writer unread; therefore it was not published. Not a voice was raised in the house against the motion, notwithstanding the fact that some of the members are also members of the A. P. A. It is stated also that four legislators of the latter class promptly telegraphed their resignations as members of the order. Further intelligence from Butte is that the A. P. A.s had left that city for the state capital, and that the opposition to Carter might result in Tillman or Ie to be elected.

This illustration of A. P. A. procedure should rouse the country to prompt action towards this dangerous society. That there are in its organization elements of respectability and patriotism is well known, and is further emphasized by the timely action of the members who withdrew upon the offensive letter being read at Helena. Were these elements to fully realize the unpatriotic nature of the work they are aiding by their membership in the order, it probably would see them no more. But the reception given such overt actions will serve to make the order's operations more secret, and therefore more fraught with peril. Already it has given abundant evidence that so far as a republican is concerned, where there shall be a free exercise of religion, the A. P. A. is a treacherous organization.

There is no necessity here to comment on Mr. Carter or the Catholics in their methods. The fact is that Mr. Carter is being persecuted by a powerful secret society because of his religious affiliations; and the threat is that every public officials that they will be practically disenfranchised if they will not engage in this lawless persecution. When the society which is doing this work refers in the paper's alleged "impressible security in circling to Americans what they shall do and what they shall not do," constitutes suggests that they incorporate the organization in the A. P. A. exactly, in accountable cases in the recent appointments of political sensibilities.

As to how far this religious persecution will go in this land may not be measured at present. The crusade against the Catholics was not the first instance. It is not a little during in of the opening wedge which, if it be not now withstanded, will rend the Republic, and pave the way for a despotism simply hateful to common sense. The danger to this government from secret societies is just beginning to manifest itself. Our statesmen should cope with the problem as it assumes such proportions as to require serious treatment.

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