

In a recent speech delivered in Ellensburg by Hon. J. H. Morgan on the subject of public schools, that gentleman stated that the first school taught in Washington was in Walla Walla county in 1850. In this the gentleman must be mistaken. The Whitman mission was founded at Waiilatpu, in that county in 1836, and instruction of children soon after began. At the time of the massacre in 1847 there were a number of white and half-breed children at Waiilatpu being taught. This condition of affairs was suddenly terminated by the massacre, and for more than ten years thereafter there was no school nor any population calling for one. The first school taught in Washington was in 1833. A yankee by the name of John Ball came out that year with Nathaniel Wyeth's trading party, and Dr. McLoughlin engaged him to teach school at the Hudson Bay Co.'s fort at Vancouver, there being quite a large number of children there, chiefly half-breeds. The next year Ball went to the Sandwich islands and thence returned to Boston. He was succeeded as pedagogue by an English sailor. In 1836 Cyrus Shepard, one of the Methodist missionaries attached to the mission in the Willamette valley was employed by Dr. McLoughlin to teach the school. When the Catholic missionaries arrived in 1838, they made Vancouver their headquarters, and the cause of education there fell into their hands. It may be said, then, that the first school in Washington was opened at Vancouver in 1833 and that it has been fairly continuous ever since, the Catholic schools for girls and boys now maintained there being its legitimate successors. The second school was that at the Whitman mission, which, however, was terminated by the horrible massacre of Nov. 29, 1847, and had no legitimate successor.

It seems that Idaho's effort to treat the Mormon question heroically in her constitution will result in an indefinite postponement of her admission. In order to prevent the interference of the Mormon church in political affairs, a test oath was incorporated in that document, which may be required of any elector before permitting him to vote, the substance of which is that he does not belong to any society, church, lodge or organization whose members practice or believe in polygamy, or which teaches the doctrine that allegiance to it is higher than to the nation, and the oath is so searching and comprehensive that it admits of no equivocation or avoidance, while the punishment for perjury in taking it wrongfully is very severe. The question of the constitutionality of this oath is now before the supreme court for decision, and the senate committee on territories has decided to take no action until the court's ultimatum is rendered. Unless by some means this question can be made a special one

before the court a decision in the ordinary course of procedure can not soon be expected. Disappointing as this may be, the constitutionality of the test oath is a vital question that ought to be definitely determined, and the best interests of Idaho require that she should start right on this point. If its constitutionality be sustained, it will supply a precedent by which Utah may be governed in making a constitution which will find favor with congress and pave the way for her admission.

Windom's silver bill has received the endorsement of the executive and has become an administration measure, though it will hardly receive party support as such. There is a wide divergence of opinion on this silver question, and this bill is neither radical enough to suit the rabid silver men nor conservative enough for the mono-metalists. It hardly seems possible that the silver men could demand more than this gives them, a sure market at ruling rates in the world's market for all they produce, the silver being stored away where it cannot get into outside markets to bring down the price, but they do, and will apparently not be satisfied with anything less than the privilege of pocketing the difference between the actual value of their silver and its coined fictitious value at the expense of people who earn their living in some other business than silver mining. There will be "hiyou wawa" in Washington before they succeed in doing it.

Chinese New Year's celebration has been in full blast in every city on the coast the past week and the rattle of firecrackers has sounded like the musketry of a battle. When it comes to burning powder upon festal occasions the Chinaman does it with a prodigality the Caucasian is not capable of. If he ever learns to burn it in rifles and cannons as well—and to stay around where some one else is doing the same—China will become the most formidable nation on earth.

Wyoming will be the next territory to have an admission bill debated in congress. The senate committee has reported a bill for that purpose. It will doubtless pass that body, but its fate in the house is more uncertain, as no doubt the territory will not be allowed to stand on its own merits alone there, but will be considered in connection with others.

The Ellensburg Improvement Company has filed articles of incorporation with the secretary of state of Washington, the capital stock being \$1,000,000. The object of the corporation is to engage in general manufacturing, building, milling and mining. It was started by local capitalists but eastern capital is now being invested in it.