

The Farmington Enterprise

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Editorials

A Doubtful Reform

Whenever Archie G. Leonard speaks on matters of education, the people of Farmington if not of all this part of the County listen with interest born of confidence in the speaker. So when Mr. Leonard advocates a change so far-reaching as the abolition of school districts and formation of a single school board for the whole county, it challenges the attention of every citizen.

The plan presents a number of undoubted advantages over the present system which includes in this county 178 boards of education. But with all the arguments in its favor, one may yet question whether it would be entirely wise to take the matter of education out of hands of the people of each locality and place the entire administration of school affairs of such a large community into the control of seven or nine men.

It might be all very well were it not for one pitfall, one which the proposed plan itself seeks to avoid, but into which it might, almost surely plunge us deeper than ever. That factor is politics. Creating a county school board of seven or nine men at salaries of \$3,000 each, opens up just that many more jobs to be fought for, political plums to be pursued by party workers who have no greater capabilities for running a large educational system than the present school district board members have for running small ones—probably less.

It would mean just that many more of the disgraceful and disgusting scrambles for office which have nauseated the people of this County more than once in recent years. (On one occasion not long ago an official who died was scarcely in his coffin before the chase was on).

It would mean putting into the hands of half a dozen political job-holders a power which it is fearsome to contemplate, opening up wide opportunities for chicanery such as have never existed before. In the larger districts with even local officials, there have frequently been dark rumors about text-book arrangements, purchase of supplies, etc. One thinks of the immense volume of business that would be handled by a county board, of how great the stakes would be in business done with such a board, and asks himself if experience has shown that we might find in this County seven or nine men who could and would go out and get themselves elected to office by the people, and then could be relied on to manage affairs with the same conscientiousness that is exercised by local school board members, whose acts are reflected in their own taxes.

When a man reputed to be a millionaire is not above stooping to defraud his own school district of \$14,000, what could be expected of men less wealthy, to whom a good deal less than \$14,000 would be a real temptation, and whose faithfulness or unfaithfulness would be toward not their neighbors and friends in their own community, but merely

a large public of thousands who meant nothing to them between elections.

We would have these men choose a county superintendent at \$10,000 or \$12,000 a year, a man who, it is said, "would not have to play the game." But does anyone believe for a moment, that any school man could get himself named to so choice a job by elected officials, just being a good school man alone? The candidate for it may be a real educational leader, but he had better have a bit of diplomacy and be somewhat of a politician himself if he wants to get and hold such a place.

No, the little local school boards may be somewhat inefficient, untrained in conducting school business, a little behind in the newer things in education, but we know that they are honest, that they are conscientious, that they act for what they believe to be the best interests of their districts. They have a good motive for doing so—the very smallness of the district makes its interest their interest, as taxpayers and as parents.

To replace these boards, whatever their limitations, with a little group of office-holders at the county-seat would be an exchange offering so few certain benefits, and of such great probable hazard, as to frighten thoughtful citizens from supporting it.

The proposal also involves, besides opening another avenue of political machinations, the whole question of abandonment of local self-government, which has been going on in various directions in recent times. That is a tremendous question, in itself.

Why Crime Grows

It takes six months or a year for a commission studying the causes of increase in crime to make a preliminary report of very little meaning, but only six years to serve a 15-year sentence for armed robbery of a bank. Possibly there is something in the latter fact that would make the study easier for the crime commission.

Two Jackson convicts who held up the Orion State Bank in 1924 have been paroled, dispatches say, by Governor Green, having served six years. One was to have served 15 years and the other 12½ years. The reason given is that these convicts' two companions, also sentenced for 12½ and 15 year terms, were released by the then Governor Alex Groesbeck within two years after having been sentenced "without any reason being given."

If it were needed, the concluding portion of the same dispatch offers the crime study commission one more kidding as to why not only crime but corruption grows:

"On recommendation of Wood, (Commissioner of pardons and paroles), Gov. Green also paroled Louis W. Schnorr, who was sentenced to from six months to five years on a charge of attempting to bribe the East Grand Rapids council to award paving contracts to a firm he represented. He has served approximately two months. Schnorr was merely an

employee and was carrying out instructions, Wood said, and the parole was recommended because his superiors were freed after paying fines.

Read again—"Schnorr, who was sentenced to from six months to five years . . . was merely an employee . . . his superiors were freed after paying fines."

What Other Newspapers Are Saying

Dragging Them Down

(The Lansing Capital News)
"The rejection of Judge Parker followed charges that he was unfriendly to labor. Decisions he rendered in lower courts were dug up to prove this claim. Speeches he had made were called to prove the additional charge that he was prejudiced against members of the Negro race. The fact that he had no satisfactory answers to either of these accusations was sufficient reason to prevent the elevation of Judge Parker to the highest tribunal in the land, where fair men's minds are vitally needed to consider and decide the many vexing problems of our day."

Another and more serious drawback to Parker's choice was the claim that his nomination was based upon political consideration. . . . Of all the branches of American government, the Supreme Court is one in which there is no room for politics. And had Parker been confirmed, it would have been at a high price for both the administration and the court. . . . Disregard most of the evidence against Parker. Overlook that he is an anti-labor judge. Forget his racial prejudices. . . . and for good measure, give him credit for being honest and sincere. Then what have we? Only an average lawyer and an unsuccessful southern politician. To retain the respect of the people, the Supreme Court cannot be made up of such men. Had Parker been confirmed he would have been elevated to a high bench; it would have been pulled down to his level—in the public mind.

Disturbing

(Charlotte Republican-Tribune)
"Mrs. Ruth Hanna McCormick has provided herself a real handicap in her race for senator. Her own testimony that she personally spent a quarter million dollars to win the senatorial nomination is disturbing news during this period of unemployment. Many households are concerned with getting the basic necessities of life. The average wage earner will give no consideration to the cost of campaigns of this character. Postage alone would represent a pre-war fortune. People are suspicious of office holders. It is astonishing to learn how many persons regard office holding as representing some sort of graft. So the plain voter will set about asking himself how Mrs. McCormick is going to get her money back giving no consideration to the fact that Mark Hanna's daughter is very rich and a quarter million dollars is of no serious financial concern to her. It is hard to contemplate that J. Hamilton Lewis, the democratic nominee, has an outside chance

To-Curb 'Billboards' MELBOURNE, Australia.—Over-riding a judgment of the Supreme Court of Victoria, the High Court of Australia has upheld a law prohibiting the erection of billboards or the exhibition of advertisements along any state highway without the consent of the Country Roads Board.

Beware Of Fakirs

(Michigan Bulletin)
A few days ago the Michigan Securities Commission warned holders of securities against turning them over to strangers for disposal. "A gang," said the commission, "is working in Michigan who secure possession of stocks and bonds through fraudulent means and are never seen again."

We should also beware of the solicitors who are using the U. S. mails to ensnare victims. Right now a certain Western individual is flooding the mails of this state with offers of an investment guaranteed to pay three and four times the usual dividend returns. Out of the goodness of his heart he is giving you an opportunity to get in on the ground floor with the original investors.

If you receive such an offer consult your banker before deciding to part with any of your money. Let him pass on the reliability and worthiness of the scheme. If he gives his approval after investigation your chances of loss will be reduced to a minimum. But rest assured he will give no such advice. Any reliable corporation, netting big interest returns, won't be using the mails to get financial aid—they'd have trouble shoeing insistent investors off the front doorstep.

Power Of Advertising

Beyond all question the most potent creator of business demands is the newspaper advertisement. Millions upon millions of dollars are expended every day in the stores of America because well written advertisements have directed public attention to convenient, becoming, attractive, useful, ornamental and suitable mer-

chandise. The sale of all necessities, all luxuries, all indulgences, is more powerfully stimulated by the newspaper advertisement than by any other agency. Only hunger, cold and nakedness are comparable to the advertisement as a promoter of sales—and even purchases of food, fuel and clothing are directed more largely by the business columns of the press than by any other influence except immediate necessity.

The largest stores in our greatest cities have been built up by their advertising, their persistent and clever invitation to the public in the press to share in their bargains. Imagine what would happen to daily sales of merchandise real estate, theatre tickets, insurance, books and other things, if newspaper advertisements were prohibited by law for six months. It is not exaggeration to say that they would drop 50 per cent.—Exchange.

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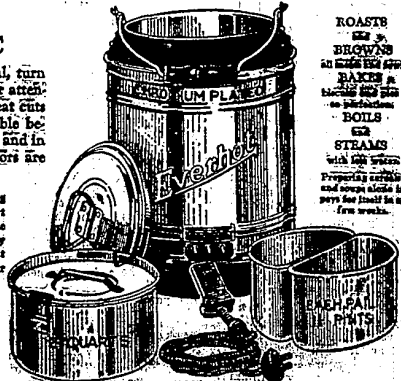
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