

## The Farmington Enterprise

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## EDITORIAL

## TWELVE YEARS IS LONG ENOUGH

There are so many candidates for so many offices in the Republican primaries in Oakland County this year that many voters will find it difficult to choose the men to fill the vacancies.

But there is one contest that the people of Oakland County should and undoubtedly will take in hand. That is for the office of Circuit Court Commissioner. This office pays about \$12,000 a year in fees, and is therefore one of the most, if not the most lucrative office in the County.

The situation which commands the attention of every voter arises from the three-cornered contest that has developed. The County's two commissioners are by custom divided between Pontiac and Royal Oak. George Hartwick, the present commissioner in Royal Oak, is retiring voluntarily after six years, in favor of Harry J. Merritt, who should and undoubtedly will be elected.

The other two aspirants are Ralph Keeling, present incumbent, and Earl L. Phillips. Mr. Keeling has held the commissioner's job for 12 years, and there is an unmistakable and increasing sentiment throughout the County that when one man has held an office so long, it is time that he show some disposition to step out. This sentiment was evident two years ago, when Mr. Phillips, then practically unknown, came within 700 votes of defeating Mr. Keeling, with 20,000 votes cast. It would seem that that might have been a cue for Mr. Keeling to retire.

But this Mr. Keeling seems unwilling to do. So far as can be learned, his only answer to the suggestion that he give someone else a chance, is to the effect that "It's a good job, and if the people are willing to re-elect me, why should I give it up?"

Mr. Keeling seems unable to realize that for one man to hang on to a job in public life for 12 years and then ask two more, is quite contrary to our democratic theory of government. In many cases the law prohibits it. In others, as in the case of the presidency, custom adopted by wise men forbids it. It is prudent to make changes in the personnel of government. Anything else leads towards the evils of hereditary rule. Long, uninterrupted office-holding often tends to make officials arrogant, leads them to forget that they are but servants of the people. Unfortunately, it cannot be said that Mr. Keeling has entirely escaped this only-human tendency.

Two years ago, when Mr. Hartwick sought re-election, he declared that if elected he would retire voluntarily at the end of the term. He has kept his word, as a man should do. Desirous as Mr. Hartwick might have been for another term, he has acceded to the principle that good government demands occasional change in our officials.

Of course, Mr. Keeling may believe he is indispensable to the office of circuit court commissioner,

er, that it cannot be properly run unless he is there. But in the history of the world, no man has yet been born who could not be replaced. Should this instance prove to be history's great exception, and the people of Oakland County find, after declining to re-elect Mr. Keeling this year—as we think they will do—that he is indispensable, they would only need to elect him two years hence to have him back again. There is nothing to indicate that he would refuse and the County thus suffer irreparable loss.

Of course, no calamity would ensue if, through force of habit or other causes, Republican voters should renominate Mr. Keeling. But just how much longer, we wonder, would Mr. Keeling then keep on running for office, if he felt he had a chance to be elected? Twelve years is a long time to hold an office. It was 'way back in 1916 that Mr. Keeling was first elected. America had not yet entered the World War. Radio had been unheard of, except by experts and a few amateurs sitting with head-sets clamped to their ears. Eight-cylinder automobiles were marvelled at, and balloon tires had never been heard of.

All that seems a long time ago—and it is. Yet if the people of this County heed once more Mr. Keeling's appeal for votes, next time it will be 14 years that he has held this one office. When will it stop? There is no reason to believe the man will retire of his own accord. The people must some day tell him that he has had enough, and it might as well be now.

This is a season of vacations, and usually we find, both in business and in politics, that just as much as a man needs a vacation from his office, so does the office need a vacation from the man. It is a good thing to change things around, to sweep out the cobwebs and try new methods and new men. If Mr. Keeling is unwilling to take a "vacation" and let some other citizen try his hand at the office, it is up to the people of Oakland County to step forward and command it. If Mr. Keeling has not learned the lesson of democratic government, after 12 years as an official, then he should and must be taught.

In government as in business, young men must be trained to some day carry on the work of the older ones. But if every official were to insist, like Mr. Keeling, that the office be his—until he is thrown out of it—then no worth-while young man would waste his time waiting for a chance to serve in government.

Two ambitious, energetic young men seek the office of circuit court commissioner. Mr. Phillips and Mr. Merritt have the support of practically the entire Oakland County bar, in their candidacies. We commend them to our readers—we advocate their election as a demonstration that the people of Oakland County believe in a fair opportunity for every worthy man who seeks a place in his public life.

## ODDS AND ENDS

After the work is finished,  
 Or even after play,  
 Did you ever figure the value  
 Of odds and ends put away?

Tiny pieces they might be,  
 Pieces of wood or of tin;  
 By fitting the parts together,  
 Another job could begin.

Scraps of silk from dresses,  
 And pieces riddled and torn;  
 Might be of use to someone  
 Even though patched and worn.

Odds and ends of your work,  
 Odds and ends of your play;  
 Many useful things are made  
 From odds and ends laid away.

—M. Marie Walling.

## ONE AFTERNOON'S WORK

A good illustration of what can be accomplished by an active citizen, or group of citizens, is afforded in the Ten-Mile Road. After months of discussion, the proposed extension has at last been advertised for objections, and something seems likely to happen.

A short time ago a committee was appointed by President Arthur Lamb of the Exchange Club. Fortunately Emory Hatton, who was designated chairman, and who had first called attention to the fact that the Ten-Mile road improvement was—like so many other things—getting nowhere, was possessed of the idea that something could be done and that now is the time to do it. Without stopping to consider whether it might be a "favorable time," or waiting to "give them a chance," Mr. Hatton promptly asked the County Road Commission to set a date for talking the matter over. Then he filled his car with active citizens and all went and asked the Road Commission, "When," "How," and "Why Not Now."

The result was that a hearing for objections was ordered at the earliest possible date.

The road is not paved yet, and it might not be for a long time. What has developed shows what one afternoon's time in the proper place can do.

## FROM HAPPINESS TO SORROW

A tremendous effort to reduce accidents in industry is being made. Industry discovered that accidents were not only regrettable, but costly, so their elimination began a number of years ago. For years the railroads of the nation have been conducting "Crossings Cautiously" campaigns and the loss of life in this manner has been noticeably reduced.

As great an effort is needed to reduce the hazards of happiness. Pick up any Monday morning paper during this season of the year and the front page is crowded with the story of tragic deaths by automobile accidents and drownings. At one time, during the fore part of July it seemed as if an epidemic of drownings had broken out in the state.

Some of these deaths, in fact most of them, were preventable. There is no use taking a chance when driving, fishing or swimming. These pleasures are not worth the hazards.

It is better to be timid and alive in a boat than to be brave and drowned from a canoe. It is better to be called an old woman and stick close to the shore than it is to have a pulmotor applied in an effort to bring you back from a shore on the other side of eternity. It is better to build up a reputation as a careful driver than to pose as a fellow who burns up the highways. Don't be afraid to insist on using good judgment at all times. You may live longer.

The loss of life is the tragedy of the tourist season. Such a tragic period is now here. Only the most extreme care will prevent serious accidents. Be careful this summer.—Exchange.



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