

The Farmington Enterprise

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Editorials

We Ought To Have More Of Them

Within the past two weeks, three unusual gatherings have been held in Farmington. All have concerned the future of the car tracks on Grand River avenue, but not less interesting than the subject at hand has been the attendance and the discussions.

At the first meeting, thirty-five leading business-men and other citizens gathered. The other two meetings, for all in the community, were attended by over 100 men and women the first time, and 70 the second time.

The assembly of the business-men was the first time in years that they have gathered in such numbers for consideration of a common problem. Likewise, the meeting of 100 citizens a few nights later was the first time in a long while that so many have come together, bidden by a common cause.

Attending these meetings and listening to the expressions of opinion, one cannot but wonder if a great deal of good might not be accomplished, both for the community and for each as individuals, if the business-men and the citizens as a whole were each to meet occasionally and discuss common problems and possibilities of advancement for the community. It is easy to conceive of many benefits and much progress that might result from such gatherings, but even with this factor aside, the coming together, and exchanging views, getting better acquainted and increasing mutual understanding, could not but be of the greatest value.

It is unfortunate that the circumstance which has led to these unusual meetings is not one for rejoicing, but rather one which many fear may have an outcome unfavorable, if not disastrous to Farmington. Yet whatever the result, much good still might come from it, if it should prove to be a factor in increasing community consciousness. We are all busy these days, each with his own business. Without our realizing it, we are likely to hold our "nose to the grindstone" so close that we lose sight of what makes it turn.

The Newest From The County Seat

Citizens of Oakland County, reading about the recent achievement of statesmanship at the County seat, Prosecutor Norman Orr's trick "election" two weeks ago to the office of probate judge, wondered what kind of "shenanigans" would be in order next among our officials in Pontiac.

They didn't have long to wait. Sheriff Frank Schram, who before the election told the supervisors that he would be content with \$2,000 less salary than he had been drawing, if they would only "let my deputies alone," sent them the pleasing news, (after he was re-elected), that he would not only not work now for \$5,000, but demands the same \$7,000 plus a lot more, "or else." The "Or else" is that his office would go on a fee basis, costing the County many thousands of dollars extra each year.

The Supervisors didn't like it, and some of them said some things about the Sheriff that none of them believed any of them would say about any County official—a few weeks ago. The doughy Sheriff's alibi is that "they didn't take me up on my proposition when they had a chance." And now let them take the consequences for it—or rather, let the taxpayer suffer for the failure of his representatives to realize a good offer when they get one. Such a thing as the necessity for economy in County expenditures, or the welfare of the people who elected him, never seems to have entered the Sheriff's mind—at least, since the election.

Now no one is so childish as to expect that public officials are ever, at least in the present state of human nature, going to be wholly unselfish and put the public welfare first and their own second. All that the practical citizen asks is reasonable consideration such as, for instance, that which an employe in private business shows toward his employer. And employes in private business do not die down into the pockets of the boss for the last cent, simply because they would be fired if they did. Our Sheriff, however, seems to consider the salary matter as a sort of "put and take" game for him to play with the Supervisors, with the best guesser winning.

Nothing could better prove and illustrate the fact pointed out not long ago by a reader in a letter to this newspaper, in which he said that "those whom we have elected have become, not our servants, but our masters." The Sheriff of Oakland County is not only going to set his own salary, but he's going to "make 'em like it" and make us pay for it.

We don't think that Farmington has any reason to regret that in the voting here on November 4, Mr. Schram ran third in a field of three.

If the new pavement on Grand River will only last as long as it's been "under construction," there won't be any reason to complain.

Oakland County officials are worrying about whether the County tax will be spread, and how and when. That isn't the big problem with the rest of us—it's how to pay 'em.

The only "hard times" apparent at the football games, is the hard time finding somebody who didn't go.

When they are driving slow either it's a new driver or they have paid cash for the car.—Rochester Clarion.

Clipped From Other Newspapers

Materialism Smashed

By Charles P. Stewart
(Central Press Staff Writer)
Washington—Hard times may or may not have been the direct cause of the other day's election result.

Personally I think not—not directly. Indirectly, yes, however.

If it had not been for hard times, I think that millions of voters who evidently voted their convictions on Nov. 4 would have felt that they could not afford to vote such convictions.

While "prosperity" lasted, I think that no policy which the party in power could have conceived would have induced a majority of the voters to vote against the party in power. They may not have been very sure that they were beholden to the party in power for all the "prosperity" they were enjoying, but neither were they sure that they were not beholden to it. They were not taking any chances.

With prosperity gone floozy, they could vote as they chose to vote and possibly would have liked to vote in 1928 or even 1924 maybe.

In the sense that hard times, according to my humble calculations, set the voters free to vote to suit themselves last election day, hard times may be said, then, indirectly to have influenced the result most decidedly—in fact, decisively.

It happened none too soon, and it is no particular reflection on the G. O. P. to say so.

The last 10 years' trend of government in Washington has been in a direction in which war and immediately post-war conditions started it trending. It is likely enough that the trend would have been the same way under a series of Democratic as under a series of Republican administrations.

It has been a trend toward a destination where material prosperity is placed above everything.

This is not merely my own individual opinion. If I had room, I could quote a long list of eminent authorities on the subject—notabilities like Senators Norris, Tom Walsh, Couzens, Caraway and the late Senator La Follette. I got a long interview one from Senator Kings on our public life's drift entirely away from the spiritual; another one from Senator Shipstead on the growth of Mussolinism in America.

Of course material prosperity is fine—but not at the sacrifice of everything else—democracy, liberty, human rights, every high ideal. That's what these senators among many others, were free to admit that they were fearful of.

Moreover, they agreed that the tendency was accelerating—threatening to "arrive" and disfigure itself in.

I believe some folks would be surprised if they realized the extent to which, in recent years, responsible authorities discussed the prospects of popular government's extinction in America.

But while prosperity hung on there appeared to be nothing that anyone could do about it.

The election result, however, has had the effect of a bomb bursting in the very vitals of the steam roller of materialism.

It does not matter so much what party profits by the explosion.

The essential thing is that the burst has scattered the machine's cogs and cams all over the landscape. The roller naturally is halted. The man in the driver's seat (not himself particularly to be blamed, for he was doing only what he was put there to do) is frightened and hesitant. A lot of tinkering will be required, to get his roller going again anyway—and repairs will be difficult in the altered circumstances soon to follow the crippling of the roller.

If the old firm of political contractors is permitted to continue on the job two years hence, it will be an exceedingly chastened firm of contractors.

If the old firm's rival firm is given the contract instead, it can be depended on to instruct its driver to be mighty careful with that steam roller throughout the ensuing quadrennium—not that it is any better, as a firm, than the other one, but it will be afraid of its life.

Or maybe both firms are on the

ragged edge of disintegrating, to be supplanted by a couple (or more) of new firms.

That really would be the most satisfactory outcome.

The two old firms have been dead on their feet for a long while. People repeatedly have expected one or the other or both of them to blow up and go into liquidation, but hitherto they have kept on worrying along somehow. At any rate, it is a mistake to think of Nov. 4's catastrophe to the G. O. P.'s steam roller in terms of what will happen to the roller's driver in 1932—or in terms of what driver Aunty Democracy probably will suggest to put in charge of the roller, should the contract be awarded to Aunty.

The thing to think of is that our spell of hard times, painful as it has been, is one of the best things that ever happened to this country.

It gave the voters a chance to express themselves.

Freedom Of The Press

(Ionia County News)

Another attempted encroachment upon freedom of the press is seen in a reported request of the Federal Farm Board for action against a Nebraska weekly newspaper which had dared to criticize the workings of that body.

According to a dispatch to the New York Times, the board has asked the Federal Trade Commission and the Post Office Department to investigate the offending editor.

Regardless of the merits of the newspaper criticism, it seems that the marshalling of these formidable government forces against a little country weekly is a rather ridiculous proceeding.

It is generally recognized that the Farm Board has a difficult task, and by many it is believed that it has been assigned an impossible one. But the board is a public body, and as such should be subject to such comment, favorable or unfavorable, as every citizen has a right to make with respect to other public bodies and public officials, not excepting Congress and the President of the United States.

The fact that the board has seen fit to try to set up such a censorship as the dispatch mentioned refers to will be taken by many as rather strong evidence that Chairman Legge and his associates are not sure of themselves. In any event it indicates that they are too emotional to handle their important job with calm assurance.

One Way To Stop Their Game

(Michigan Bulletin)

E. W. Stowe, stalwart editor of the Michigan Tradesman, calls attention to the fact that the unsolicited merchandise salesmen are busy again.

For some unknown reason the wave of unordered merchandise, which swept over the country a few years ago seems to be returning, for the mails are getting all cluttered up with handkerchiefs, neckties, socks and the like, sent out in hope that some considerable percentage of them will stick and that payment will be made by the recipients.

There is no better way to handle this matter than that used by a dentist friend who, upon receipt of a box of neckties which he had not ordered, reached down into his collection of scrap material, dug up a set of old and perfectly useless false teeth, slipped them into the box in which the ties had come and enclosed a note reading: "I trust these teeth will fit. Enclosed please find a bill for \$125."

What is home without a comfortable bed and a comfortable chair?

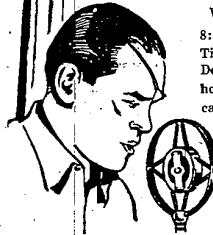
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