

The Farmington Enterprise

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Editorials

Justifying Mechanics

We live in a mechanical world, and frequently we are told that the most of civilization has been already too thoroughly mechanized. Often the question is raised as to whether this is entirely for good, and one writer recently declared that in the unlimited development of the machine, "we have unleashed a billion wild horses" which now seem to have got beyond our control.

How largely this is true must be a matter of opinion, but occasionally there appear incidents which would incline one to the belief that mechanics and industry can and do contribute much toward making this a better world to live in.

One instance of this is the application of an invention of Sergius P. Grace, a native of Farmington, to restoration of the vocal powers of an elderly Texas woman, as described in last week's Enterprise. Certainly no one reading of this great gift of Mr. Grace's inventive powers to the happiness of this woman in her last years would deny that here at least, the development of mechanics has proved of real worth in bringing about greater human happiness. That the little artificial larynx, "worth its weight in gold," not only to the aged woman but probably in money, too, was also an actual gift to her by Mr. Grace and the company with which he is connected, adds a final human touch to this real "human-interest" story. It helps us to feel that mechanics and industry, however mechanical they might make the world become, still may "have a heart" after all.

The Other Champion

"The tumult and the shouting dies." The contest is all over, and everyone knows by now who is Farmington's most popular girl. It took months to decide.

But it probably wouldn't have been very hard to find out last week who was the most unpopular person. First, last, unanimous and universal choice of most of the citizens of Farmington would undoubtedly have been the man who invented taxes and decreed that people must pay 'em.

The People Must Be Taught

"Parking Drive Profit \$3,500." So ran the headlines in Detroit newspapers last week.

What was the story? Was it something like this?

The Detroit City Council, aware of the ever-growing inconvenience and annoyance caused to citizens of the "Motor City of the World" by lack of parking space downtown, determined to find a way out of the difficulty. So the Council took over a dozen vacant lots downtown that have been used for parking places at from 50 cents down (but mostly 50 cents for even half an hour's parking). The City operated the parking lots for three months, charging 15 cents for parking for less than an hour and 25 cents for up to three hours. The

Council's aim was to find out if the City could operate the lots at rates that most automobile owners could easily pay, the Council at the same time performing a great service for the taxpayers.

And at the end of three months, it was found that not only could the lots be operated for the benefit of the citizens, without loss to the City, but the rates actually paid a profit, however slight. And one Councilman declared that it was but the simple duty of the Council to serve the people well. And all the citizens of the City were mightily pleased, and in the coming election all the Councilmen are certain to be re-elected.

But wait—was that the story? Or was it a mere dream? Whatever that was, the facts are something else. The real story is this:

Nine thousand three hundred dollars paid to the employees of none-too-gentle crews of "huckies" who cruised up and down the streets, yanking up none-too-gently, by the front axles, twelve thousand two hundred and sixty-one automobiles owned by taxpayers of the City. Twenty-four thousand, seven hundred and sixty-one dollars taken from the citizens after they had pursued their cars to the "pounds." Two thousand, seven hundred and twenty-two dollars and eighty-five cents paid to owners of these pounds for storing the improperly-parked cars until the distressed owners called for them.

What the police department calls "profit to the City"—\$3,536.41. And a high police official declaring that all owners of cars "must be taught that downtown lot parking fees are a part of the usual expense of owning an automobile."

It might be interesting to ask this Detroit official and the Council—which appropriated fifty thousand dollars, to stop people from parking in the streets but not one cent to provide them any other place to park—just "what shall it profit a city" if it hauls away thousands of the people's illegally-parked automobiles, yet gives them no way to avoid doing the same thing over again?

It is just such official acts, emphasizing the ruling rather than the reasoning powers of officials, that cause people to lose confidence in those elected to public office, to make them doubt whether it is possible to obtain intelligent government. Policies such as this help to make wider and deeper the ever-growing gulf which leads people to look on "the government" or "city" as one thing, and "the people" as the other, instead of the government being merely representative of the whole people, as it should be. How the ideal may be accomplished is indeed a problem, but certainly hauling seven hundred citizens' automobiles away every day for three weeks doesn't seem to be a step in the right direction.

The Pathfinder

The handbook issued this week by the Board of Education of Farmington Public Schools

should be of great convenience to parents, pupils and teachers. Although efforts were directed toward making the book as concise as possible, it still contains practically all essential information.

It is not however, in the mere giving of information that "The Pathfinder" will undoubtedly be of greatest benefit. Those to whom it will be particularly helpful are prospective students and their parents. The little book will give them in the best possible way an accurate idea of the achievements, aims and endeavors of Farmington High School, the kind of citizens it is trying to produce.

Reading the handbook, one cannot help but feel proud of the things it is able to say about the School's standing, its facilities, and curriculum. Its every page gives reason to feel that Farmington has a high school which is a credit to the community.

The World Moves And Hell Is Cooling Off

William Allen White, editor of the Emporia (Kans.) Gazette, is sure hell is vanishing, and says: "An old-fashioned hell sermon has not been preached in this locality for two years. As man becomes richer he sloughs off his belief in hell. Hell is needed by the poor as a place for the rich to fry in. Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham needed hell for Dives. Prof. George H. Butts, of Northwestern University, a good Methodist college, has finished the tabulation of 700 questionnaires, 500 answers by Protestant pastors and 200 others answered by students in divinity schools. Only 53 per cent of the ministers confessed the belief in hell as an actual place. The students were still more hell-less, for only 11 per cent of them asserted an affirmative. In ten years more hell will freeze over, and by 1950 hell will pass out of theology in this country, as completely as hate has passed out of religion. As religion becomes more and more the yearning in man's heart for self-respect and a desire to live honestly and kindly and even more nobly, hell—the fear motive in religion—will disappear. Hell cools as justice broadens the earth."

STARTING FIRE COSTLY

Starting brush fires without a permit in Michigan's forest fire hazard zones may prove costly, as one resident of Gwin discovered last week.

The smoke from his fire was spotted by a fire towerman and immediately investigated by a state fire warden, who found that the brush pile had been fired without the knowledge and consent of forest fire authorities. The offender in this case was given the opportunity of paying the cost of investigation. When he refused, formal complaint was lodged against him by the local fire warden and he was arrested, found guilty in justice court, and fined \$25 and costs.

STATE PARKS GET FUNDS

Twenty-six state parks will be benefited to the extent of \$161,050 by the release of funds by the state administrative board early last week, according to P. J. Hoffmaster, superintendent of parks, who states that park headquarters buildings, general improvements, and sanitary conveniences will be installed.

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