

The Farmington Enterprise

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Editorials

Still Reason To Hope

Farmington's struggle to keep the street-car tracks on Grand River is by no means won, but yet it is not hopelessly lost, either. There is much reason to hope that even at this late hour the battle may end favorably.

The men of this section who have appeared before the State Highway Department at Lansing have been thoroughly impressed with the very evident desire of the highway commissioner himself, Grover C. Dillman, to be fair and considerate. Even those who have felt that the Grand River area is asking very little indeed, in the light of what has been expended on Woodward avenue, are quick to commend highly the treatment accorded them by Mr. Dillman.

The fact that the plans for removing the tracks have proceeded as far as they have is probably due, not to unwillingness to give the Grand River area due consideration, but to lack of complete understanding of how much the trolley-tracks mean. One of the major tasks of those active in the fight has been to drive home at every opportunity the important fact that the Grand River area which the dislaid carload freight facilities, except for these tracks—and that the discontinuance of electric car service in other communities offers no parallels to this case. The most recent instance is that of Mt. Clemens, which, of course, like other communities except those along Grand River, has a steam-road connection, the Grand Trunk.

Full appreciation by the State Highway Department of this circumstance, and its importance should it seem, decide the problem definitely and permanently in favor of the tracks remaining.

The Grand Jury

No one knows now what the grand jury investigation of Oakland County affairs, soon to begin, will bring forth. Probably there will be a good deal developed by the inquiry that no one but the jurors themselves will know after they have finished, the sessions being secret.

Not a little debating has been going on as to whether the call for a grand jury was advisable, and whether the results are likely to justify the effort and expense involved. But it is safe to say, after listening to considerable discussion, that most of the people of Oakland County not only feel that there should be a grand jury investigation, but will be surprised if there are, not some very interesting and important disclosures made.

As to whether the information will justify the means used to obtain it, perhaps only time may tell. But the entire effect of grand jury investigation can scarcely be measured by the direct and apparent results obtained. It does not always end in culprits being sent to jail, and even less seldom is there a return of public money illegally obtained. Yet beyond doubt the investigation will have a salutary effect, at least. Last Spring, when the first talk was heard of a possible grand jury investigation, one member of the board of supervisors remarked shortly afterward that within a few weeks the mere mention of such a possibility had resulted in a saving of \$30,000 per year to the County, in salaries being paid to superfluous County employees who were hastily dropped from the payrolls. Whether or not this be a fact, it still is true that "eternal vigilance" is not only "the price of liberty," but necessary for good government. No good official was ever spoiled by being watched, or resents it. The other kind, if such there be in the County, need not be considered, as to whether they like it or not.

Possibly no one will welcome the investigation more heartily than the honest, conscientious, capable County officials who undoubtedly feel that the many whisperings, rumors and reports have cast upon them a shadow which they are eager to have removed.

Goodbye To Great Men

Most impressive to those who heard it was the account given last week of progress that has been made in improving Oakland County's rural school system, by Deputy County Commissioner Archie G. Leonard at the Farmington Exchange Club. The surprising advances made, largely through the helping-teacher system, which this County is the first in Michigan to adopt, call forth admiration on the part of every citizen interested in the improvement of our educational program.

Mr. Leonard convinced his hearers that while country schools still have but one room, most of the other aspects, and particularly the teaching, of the "little old-fashioned one-room country school" have disappeared.

Yet while it is undoubtedly for the best, this passing of another American institution leaves a disquieting thought. Where, if these rude places of learning have gone forever, will America get its great men of the future? For has any man loomed large in the Nation's eye, whether President, captain of industry, or prince of finance, ever failed at some time or other, to declare that he was started on his way to greatness in the "humble little red schoolhouse I attended as a poor boy"? If he has, we have yet to hear of him.

So if these men be believed, in what direction can our country look for its leaders? And if it should, by chance, and some in its midst, who have managed to struggle to fame and fortune without the blessing of the "little red schoolhouse," then what has become of another fond American tradition—that the surest way to get to the top is to start at the bottom? The passing of the tradition would be almost as momentous as that of the "little red schoolhouse" itself.

Clipped From Other Publications

Chicago's Whoopee Spoilsman

(Capper's Magazine)
A story, painfully interesting, of how graft and extravagance have run riot in Chicago is that of Cook county's sanitary commission. Its duty was to keep Lake Michigan free from sewage pollution. For all the work it had to do, a bureau should have been enough. Instead it had 8,000 employees and a payroll close to \$36,000,000 a year.

The commission sent a delegation to Washington, to a hearing. But the larger part of the delegation landed in New York, rented most of a hotel floor and proceeded to make a night of it, resulting in a big bill from the hotel for broken furniture.

All of which means Chicago and Cook County are going to have a first-class government one of these days.

Must We Seek Safety From Courts?

(Grand Rapids Chronicle)

It is odd how at times a normal sense of justice can be obscured by the placing of a too high valuation upon some pet like or dislike. Our valued friend and contemporary, Rep. Art Dykstra, writing in the Standard-Bulletin last week, seems to have allowed his keen sense of justice to be outweighed by his zeal in another direction, when he discussed the action of the Cadillac judge who jailed a farmer for refusing to tell where he had procured intoxicants. Mr. Dykstra is a dry, which is his privilege, and a sincere one, for which he is to be respected. However, in all friendliness, we cannot follow his reasoning when he says, ament the Cadillac case:

Judge Millington 'wants to know about the guilty party 'higher up,' and as long as the man guilty of the lesser charge claims that he 'cannot remember' so long he will stay in jail. . . . If all of our judges would take the same attitude we would find the real guilty parties and the prohibition law would be more respected.'

Although that has been outdated by more recent developments in the case, the fact that a member of the state legislature should feel that it is correct, is of interest.

In the first place, we feel that it is an abuse of legal power to set up an inquisition in the court. Further, that it clearly shows the need for removing the power of the offended judge to sit in contempt cases in which he figures. If judges can get away with such tactics in cases of this kind, where with the practice stop; who can set a limit to what a judge can do along the same line?

Such tactics, it would seem, decrease respect for the courts rather than increase the little respect in which the prohibition law is already held. And it is the very reason that the small offender, rather than the "higher up" almost invariably gets punished, that makes the prohibition law the cumbersome, unenforceable thing that it is. It is hard to figure how conditions along that line can be bettered by harsh, extra legal action on the part of the courts which, after all, are not presumably intended to assume the burdens of the whole enforcing agency. It is dangerous to allow this tampering, for it sets an unwelcome precedent.

A member of a body representing the people of the state of Michigan, we believe, should be able to see that democratic government will fail if the time comes when the people must be defended from the very courts of justice. The question resolves itself into something far larger than an unimportant conflict between a petty offender and a judge who seems to have strained justice. The courts must not be allowed to return to the power and autocracy of medieval times. Mr. Dykstra's forebears in the Netherlands, we remember, rebelled against just such inquisitorial treatment as would be fostered if we allow certain practices in our courts to go unchecked.

It's the little things that count. If you don't believe it, try sitting on a mountain and then on a tack.

'Irritating—But Good For Us'

(Battle Creek Moon-Journal)
Sinclair Lewis, in his Nobel prize address at Stockholm, was pretty rough on America. As he himself might express it, he took quite a few "dirty cracks" at us—of course, for our own good.

This is a nation of standardized collar "ad" heroes and wild but honest heroines, and our fiction consumers will have no other kind. Our real literary men, vigor and talent and a fresh viewpoint on life, and write honestly in the spirit of the new age, are not recognized by our self-appointed authorities. Literature is commercialized. Big business has a strangle hold on everything.

All in all, this is "the world's most contradictory, stirring and depressing land."

Yet we're not entirely hopeless. "We are coming out of the stulteness of safe and sane incredibly dull provincialism. Largely as a result of Lewis' own writings, no doubt, though he is too modest to say so. The rising generation, he thinks may 'give America, a country as strange as Russia and as complex as China, a literature worthy of her vastness.'"

Lewis is irritating, but good for us, like a mustard plaster or a gaffy. The red-headed school of literature is always useful, especially when combined with brains and artistry.

Senator Vandenberg

(Charlotte Republican)

Michigan newspaper men generally feel a pride and satisfaction in the splendid record, past and present, of Senator Arthur Vandenberg and that this personal and fraternal interest in the political welfare of the former editor of the Grand Rapids Herald will carry through his next campaign for nomination and election is a very definite fact. Senator Vandenberg's career in Washington has been a stimulating exhibit of superlative courage, virility and ability. In his speech he urged the continuation of freedom of debate in the senate because, as he said, it is the only remaining place in our scheme of two party government where this sacred constitutional right has not been abridged by political rules. Senator Vandenberg said that this freedom of debate on several occasions in the last congress aided Michigan, notably on the St. Lawrence waterway project when Chicago and New York interests were able to crowd legislation inimical to the St. Lawrence route through the House but that the measure was held up in the Senate through this debate privilege as old precedent as the federal constitution. Senator Vandenberg explained the contempt case brought against the editors of the Cleveland Press and the present status of his bill making it necessary for a second judge to hear and review all such contempt charges.

The Story Of Kraut

Sauerkraut (and printer's ink makes a funny combination. But it has proven to be a valuable one. Not so very long ago kraut was just a lot of cabbage ground in to shreds and put through an old method of fermentation. Then someone looked a little closer and found that kraut is one of great foods on earth. Doctors began to recommend both kraut and the juice of kraut, and big packing concerns began to can it. They also saw the possibility of advertising it — not as something that was merely good to eat but as the greatest strength and body builder that can be taken from the soil. The advertising hit the spot. More kraut and still more kraut was needed to meet the increasing demand. Today it can be purchased, in cans, in any grocery store in the land—and it is purchased by millions of people where before only thousands ate it. Kraut, a lowly son of the vegetable family has become an aristocrat. Could there be any lazier example of the power of printer's ink?—P. N. Averill.

Co-operate. Remember the banana. Every time it leaves the bunch it gets skinned—Exchange.

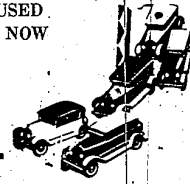
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