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J. H. BROWN, Man. Ed.

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 6TH, 1915

### WESTERN PATRIOTISM

According to Western Canada newspapers, the movement inaugurated by the Western Grain Growers Association under which grain growers should devote the proceeds of an acre of land to patriotic purposes, has secured a great response. Not the least astonishing feature of the movement is the fact that farmers of German, Austrian and Roumanian nationalities contributed just as freely and willingly as did those of British, Russian and American origin. Early estimates as to the number of acres of crops that would be donated were about 1000 but these estimates have been greatly exceeded, farmers having already agreed to devote the proceeds of 1,635 acres. The popularity of the movement is shown by the fact that several farmers have agreed to give the proceeds of more than one acre; and every confidence is felt by those in charge that before the season closes, the total number of acres donated will reach a very large figure.

### MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS

Almost without exception the municipalities of Canada are passing through a period of financial strain, when local improvement work has been curtailed and the strictest economy must be exercised.

The capital invested in so-called permanent improvements, totals a very large sum, and represents a great proportion of the taxes collected from the people. With this large expenditure in mind the question naturally arises "Is the money invested in local improvements being expended to the best advantage?"

In the matter of roadways, pavements and sidewalks, this question is causing a great deal of thought on the part of students of municipal problems. In many cities the streets are becoming sample sheets of the various kinds of paving materials. The influence or persuasive ability of salesmen may introduce new systems of roadway construction without number. These compositions are adopted and used, regardless of climatic conditions or suitability for the traffic requirements. Each municipality depends upon its own engineering advice. In rare instances only is any testing equipment available. The result is that no uniformity of value in paving or sidewalk material is secured.

Canada has reached the stage when municipalities should have available a Bureau of Municipal Research, as part of a Department of Local Government in each province. The need of such a source of information is urgent. Municipal government and municipal engineering are being conducted in too haphazard a manner for the general and permanent public good. This Bureau should deal with such questions as the testing of materials and the adoption of standards. These standards would be based upon the practical requirements. For instance, while a business thoroughfare with heavy traffic requires a certain surface material and depth of foundation, a residential street with a minimum of traffic does not demand the same wear-resisting surface nor sustaining foundation. In like manner, also, sidewalk standards should be adopted suitable to traffic requirements.

The question is a large one. Millions of dollars of the people's money are being spent annually and the credit of municipalities is being pledged to carry out work of a supposedly permanent character. In the hope that it will prove satisfactory. In the absence of any definite information to the contrary, advice or prejudice in favour of certain materials cannot be offset. No doubt if more accurate data were available, the money now spent on many of these improvements could be made go much farther by more judicious selection of methods and materials.—Conservation.

## Interesting Papers Read at Teachers' Institute, Bathurst

Address by H. H. Stuart on "The Study of Civics."—W. C. Haines, on "The Teaching of History."

### THE STUDY OF CIVICS

[An address by Principal Henry Harvey Stuart, of Douglastown, N. B., Superior School to the United Teachers' Institutes in Bathurst, Sept. 25, 1915.]

There is no more important subject than Civics on the public school curriculum. Its recent inclusion is a most favorable sign of the times, and the teacher who truly loves his country will do his best to present the subject intelligibly to his pupils. The prescribed text (R. S. Jenkinson's Canadian Civics) is an admirable one covering nearly all the points of importance and giving suggestions whereby the wide-awake teacher is enabled to supplement the rest.

The aim of true education being the development of good citizens, it follows that the study of Civics is absolutely necessary to that end, and at last we have a book to guide us in teaching the subject.

The text is very thorough. It first considers the world as a whole, then dividing it into Powers, great and small, and noticing their different kinds of government. Then our Empire is similarly treated. The constitution and government of the Dominion of Canada is considered pretty exhaustively and in a manner to rivet the child's attention. The existence of political parties is explained, and the intricacies of political platforms, conventions and other meetings, the manner of selecting and nominating candidates, the way of voting, etc., are laid bare and the duties and powers of each department of government are described.

The chapter on Taxation and the National Debt is a good one. Its discussion of the Tariff, Protection and Free Trade is unbiased, and the way in which our government raises its revenue, is made plain.

Following that of the Dominion comes an explanation of the Provincial system, then of the municipal. Then the procedure of Law Courts is described, and the educational system, and the book closes with the duties of the citizen.

No adult should fail to read the text book, and no parent should allow his children to be deprived of its lessons in school.

The question arises as to when and how to teach it. No particular time being assigned, Civics is presumably authorized for all grades. The inclusion of Civics questions in the High School and Normal School entrance examinations, this year, indicates that pupils who do not study it in Grade VII, or Grade VIII at the latest, will suffer by not doing so.

Civics can be taught in all grades even the first. In this case we should not follow the order of the text, which begins at the outside and works towards the centre, the proper course when beginning with one of the higher grades, but should begin with what comes under the pupil's own observation, working from that outwards to matters more general and abstract.

Children of Grade I have seen a policeman and have some idea of what he's for. Starting with what the child already knows the teacher can easily lead him to understand who appoints and pays the policeman and assigns his duties. The little fellow's knowledge of roads,

### FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

We believe the time has now come when this town should have an adequate system of fire alarm. The fire department is made up of as good a class of men, capable for such hazardous work as could be found in any town, and the apparatus is as good as will be found in any other town the size of Newcastle.

There is only the one thing lacking, and that is a proper and up-to-date system of fire alarm. When an alarm is sounded by the old bell system, much valuable time is lost by the firemen in not knowing exactly what direction they are to go by the time they reach the fire station. The time lost here, as everybody knows, is the very most important of all, for the result of a fire, good or bad, is determined nine times out of ten by the quickness of the response by the firemen.

It is not necessary to go into a big preamble about this great need, for everybody will admit its need, and it remains for the Town Council to take the matter up, in the interests of the firemen, as well as the ratepayers of the town, and take it up with the ultimate intention of bringing it to a focus. If the town is to grow, matters of such importance as this must grow with it.

and bridges, street lighting, the town water system etc., can all be made starting points for lessons in Civics. The very fact that the child is in school leads him to question why, and from that question he can be led to understand something of our school system. So in all grades, Geography lessons incidentally overlap into the domain of Civics, as the geography of no country or district is complete without references to its stage of civilization, government and power and its peculiar institutions.

Long before the Civics text is in the pupil's hand, he should have learned much about the district school system, how the County and Town Councils are elected and how municipal taxes are levied and spent; how a citizen votes at school meetings and in County, Town, Provincial and Dominion elections.

When should the public have the text? Not later than Grade VII. For if he doesn't complete the text in Grade VII he chances it, due to the fact that the great majority never pass that grade, he'll never complete it, and that he'll be thrown on the country an ill-informed citizen of more menace than value to the body politic.

Most citizens object to paying taxes, not, let us hope, because of inherent unwillingness to bear their fair share of the public expenses, but because they do not understand how the taxes are apportioned and why so much is needed, or because they mistrust that they are not fairly apportioned or impartially collected.

Failure to understand the real difference between direct and indirect taxation is responsible for much of our political trouble.

The wide-spread ignorance of the rules of debate, or of parliamentary procedure, which rules are taught in our Civics text, prevents intelligent expression of opinion at many public meetings.

The average citizen, knowing little or nothing about taxation, the principles of our political parties and the complexity of government, is easily deceived regarding the conduct of public affairs. Teach the child Civics and you take a long step in the direction of overcoming this helplessness of many voters.

Our democracy, in so far as our government is a democracy, is on trial. If it is to last, we must have an educated people. In ancient Athens, the system of education was so perfect that the time came when it was a matter of indifference whether the officials were elected or chosen by lot, as most every citizen was qualified. Yet Athens fell ingloriously. Why? Well, her citizens were all well trained, but all knew that it is nearly impossible to teach history to younger children without story tellings to make the subject interesting, but I have known teachers to place so much emphasis on the stories that, as the pupils advance the FACTS pass from memory, altogether, leaving only unconnected stories. The introduction of Civics in schools is a great help in arousing interest in the study of history. A state, a nation, a monarch, a parliament, legislation, carrying out of laws, levying of taxes, etc., are no longer abstract things to the pupil, but he finds that such things apply to his own country, as well as countries studied in history. A knowledge of such things should always be the beginning of history; but a great many of us consider subjects as being important only when text books are published and become part of our courses of instruction by order of the Board of Education. It is important, also, to note the bearing and forbear, to labor and wait, hence their citizens must be wise.

Great natural resources, a numerous population and unlimited wealth will not avail to save from destruction the nation that has not developed good citizenship. Ignorance is as dangerous to us as it ever was to the lead civilizations of former days.

Medical supervision of schools is authorized in every New Brunswick district and in operation in none. Compulsory attendance at school may be enforced by all districts, but it is not. Why? Some people, ignorant of the principles of Civics, are indifferent to their children's education, and make no struggle against the conditions that allow or compel them to leave school too early. Others, who know the fatal effects of ignorance, and have the power to remedy the conditions that breed it, encourage the disregard of the law and frown upon any honest attempt to enforce it, because non-enforcement enables them to obtain child labor cheap and thereby make great gain for themselves.

As the ancient democracies went down, largely because they denied equality of opportunity to a portion of their people, so must our institutions crumble and our power pass into other hands unless we see that

all the boys and girls of our land have an equal opportunity in life—that no necessities of their parents that can be relieved by the State are allowed to stand between them and a good education—that they obtain the education that will enable them not only to think clearly but to actually do things—that none be allowed to enter upon the duties of life unskilled.

But the question arises: If all are trained in citizenship and become skilled workmen, who will do the hardest and dirtiest work, hitherto done by the ignorant and unskilled? This question is easily answered. The hardest and dirtiest work, the door of which is now the poorest paid and least respected, could be disposed of in either of three ways. Let each citizen do his own share, or let it be done by turn, or let the hardest and dirtiest work be accompanied by the highest pay and if necessary—the highest honor. Let each child be taught that manual work is as honorable as any other and that the best citizen is he or she that is of most use in the community.

The whole school curriculum is of value. Few, if any subjects, can be profitably dropped, but Civics is an essential study that cannot be neglected without seriously undermining the stability of the nation and inviting disaster.

### THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

[A paper read by Principal W. C. Haines of Loggieville, before the United Teachers' Institute at Bathurst, Sept. 25, 1915.]

A large part of the history taught in school may be termed "fact lore," because it is learned mainly as information interesting and serviceable in itself. As a part of education it has a certain amount of disciplinary and moral value. The idea of history is not merely to know facts in their proper order, but to know events in their true causes and connection, to have our judgment exercised about the right and wrong of human actions as well as the sequence of events, and to know the great events which have moulded our people and government and made them what they are. Fuller says: "History maketh a man to be old without wrinkles or gray hair, privileging him with the experience of age without either the infirmities or the inconveniences thereof." But to have this result one would need to have a greater knowledge of the subject than is to be obtained from our school text books.

History has often been called a difficult subject to teach, and it is long step in the direction of overcoming this helplessness of many voters. Our democracy, in so far as our government is a democracy, is on trial. If it is to last, we must have an educated people. In ancient Athens, the system of education was so perfect that the time came when it was a matter of indifference whether the officials were elected or chosen by lot, as most every citizen was qualified. Yet Athens fell ingloriously. Why? Well, her citizens were all well trained, but all knew that it is nearly impossible to teach history to younger children without story tellings to make the subject interesting, but I have known teachers to place so much emphasis on the stories that, as the pupils advance the FACTS pass from memory, altogether, leaving only unconnected stories.

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COLUMN ON PAGE 3

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### Whole Outlook For Allies Best

(Continued from page 1.)

"Today there has been no change in the situation on our front. During the last seven days our aircraft have been very active. Seventeen air combats are reported, in only one of which a British machine was shot down. A German machine was brought down inside our lines. Yesterday attacks were made on the railway in the hostile area. The main lines are known to have been damaged in fifteen different places. Five, and probably six trains were partially wrecked and the locomotive sheds at Valenciennes were set on fire. Considerable interference thus has been caused to the German railroad organization."

Weaver's Siding School Standing Grade III—Miles Urquhart Grade II—Hugh Colford, Mary J. Colford, Gordon Colford, Lawrence Colford, (b)—Johnny Nolde, Kathleen Colford, Russell Urquhart, Mary Hogan, Helen Colford, Helen Simmons, Evangeline Veno.