

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

Published weekly by
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (Limited).

JOHN WELD, Manager.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

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Why Government by Commission?

The people of Canada have with an almost unlimited stock of complaisant confidence supplied millions upon millions of dollars and given away enough fertile land to build several empires for the construction of transcontinental railways, for the use of which they pay about all the traffic will stand. At the present session of Parliament further financial obligations for the aid of two of the lines are levied, and with the appropriation is linked a unique provision to the extent of \$150,000 for another commission to tell the Government and Parliament what to do with the tangle in which they have become involved. Innocently enough the people have been supposing that was exactly the business of successive governments, the size and cost of which have for years been steadily increasing, and yet they are apparently either unable or incapable of performing the duties for which they are paid. When anything in the nature of unusual administrative work crops up the job is turned over to a Royal Commission, the cost of which is saddled on the country. The really serious business that occupies the time and energies of a large proportion of our rulers is the distribution of patronage in the form of offices and contracts, and then partizan quarrelling over the way in which it is done. How long are the people going to submit to this sort of thing?

The Pit.

Charles Montesquieu, an eminent French historian, long ago pointed out that the corruption of each form of government commences with the decay of its principles. With the nations of the world in a state of turmoil and upheaval, such as history has never before recorded, men are compelled to consider, while the issues at stake are being fought out, whence the authority of rulers and governments who hold as mere pawns in their hands the destinies of millions of their fellow beings and who have drenched land and sea with blood? Thoughtful men are asking as never before what states exist for, if not to secure the lives, liberties and property of their citizens? Instead of this we see the whole cause of civilization disrupted, international pledges violated, every moral

and human standard and consideration ruthlessly and treacherously trampled under foot, and methods of warfare prosecuted, compared with which the practices of ignorant savages were commonplace and mild. Continued for a couple of years the horror of the world has become almost sated, and the very moral sense of neutrals, forgetful of their mutual obligations, dulled into mercenary callousness. This appalling result has been the outcome of deliberately setting aside of faith in those old and Divinely-inculcated standards of right and righteousness and replacing them by force and the State, which Prussia did forty years ago when France was overthrown and humiliated by Bismarck and Von Moltke. Once principle was abandoned every agency in the land, educational and even ecclesiastical, was subverted to military domination and state worship. For their acquiescence in this policy the German people are to-day paying the penalty with their lives and substance, and to recoup them they have the ghastly satisfaction of seeing other peoples involved in the vortex which is fast encircling them in its retributive and deadly embrace. History relates that during the bloody French Revolution one of its inciters pointed to the two thousand bloody corpses flung into the River Rhone as a sight that would "impress on beholders the omnipotence of the people." Already millions of unnamed graves cry out in mute appeal that surely forebodes a terrible day of reckoning for the German War Lords, whose over-mastering ambitions have betrayed humanity and let loose a hell upon the earth.

Who's Who for President?

The approaching Presidential Election in the United States, like every human interest of any magnitude, will likely turn upon issues arising out of the World War. From this there is no escape, because of the vastness of the conflict and the intimacy with which all the interests of mankind are now inter-related. With its national convention for the selection of a presidential candidate only a few weeks distant, the Republican party is in the extraordinary position of being without any certain forecast of its nominee. All the tentative local voting that has been done rather intensifies the uncertainties of the situation as it affects all the currents of tendency in the two great parties of the republic at the present time. The New York Outlook sums up the position with admirable terseness and lucidity, and it is worth giving, because of the unusual interest of Canadians in the issue across the lines:

There are a few consistent exponents of the doctrine that the use of force is wrong, that the way to conquer injustice is to yield to it, and if a nation is smitten on one cheek to turn the other also. Their logical candidate is William Jennings Bryan or perhaps Henry Ford.

A large number regard war as the greatest calamity that can befall the nation, and conceive the nation's first duty at all cost, is to keep out of it. Some of these merely dread war, some sincerely love peace, some are ruled by a mere sordid love of ease or gain, and others are inspired by a spirit of genuine humanity. They are not all content with present conditions, but are content to endure them. Their logical candidate is Woodrow Wilson, the present Democratic occupant of the White House.

A considerable number would avoid the personal responsibility of deciding America's foreign policy. They are perplexed and appalled. They would like to escape decision by selecting a good man whose views relating to the war are unknown, and leave it with him for decision. Their logical candidate is Chas. E. Hughes, formerly Governor of New York State, a man distinguished for the vigor of his independence and action, now a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

There are those who believe that the rights of a nation are its duties; that we may surrender rights but never our duties; that the primary duty of a nation is to protect its citizens at home and abroad on land and sea; and that the duty the United States should perform at whatever cost. They are unwilling that any man, however wise and good, shall decide for the people the question whether or not they will perform their duty; they want to perform this duty and to elect a man with the will and the ability to lead them in performing it. Their logical candidate is Theodore Roosevelt.

This brief summary of conflicting currents of opinion, adds the Outlook, may help the reader to decide which group he wishes to belong to, and aid by his influence in the pre-election discussion of the next six months.

When one reads the different accounts of the fuse investigation in the various political papers of both sides, he is forced to believe that politics must have something to do with it, for nothing but politics could cause capable reporters and editors to get such contradictory accounts of the same happenings.

What the United States Thinks of Consolidated Schools.

The consolidation of rural schools has been making rapid progress in the United States where the two primary motives in the movement are given as (1) for the purpose of securing better educational facilities, and (2) for the purpose of decreasing the cost of education on the school district. In Ontario the "cost" element has worked against any change in our rural school system, but in the country to the south it has been found that consolidation, compared with the old rural school is cheaper when account is taken of what is accomplished. The greatest gain from consolidation is in the making of two-teacher (or more) schools of the one-teacher schools—the making of graded schools.

Consolidation, as we now understand it, had its inception in Montague, Mass., in 1875, when three "district" schools were abandoned and a new brick building erected. This school is still flourishing, and serves a territory of approximately 20 square miles. In 1893 Seymour Rockwell, the founder, wrote of this school:

"For 18 years we have had the best attendance from the transported children; no more sickness among them, and no accidents. The children like the plan exceedingly. We have saved the town at least \$600 a year. All these children now attend a well-equipped school-house at the center. The schools are graded; everybody is converted to the plan. We encountered all the opposition found anywhere, but we asserted our sensible and legal rights and accomplished the work. I see no way of bringing the country schools up but to consolidate them, making them worth seeing; then the people will be more likely to do their duty by visiting them."

This school after 40 years of successful work is going on to greater things.

In 1879 the second consolidated school in the United States was started at Concord, Mass., and at the present time the State has few one-room schools left. In 1912, Ohio had 192 townships under consolidation of schools. In 1912 Indiana had 593 consolidated schools, and the movement has grown very rapidly since and spread to Louisiana, Carolina, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and all these states and the few not named are working out a program of development, and furtherance of some form of the consolidation idea. It is working out as may be gleaned from the following statement by N. C. McDonald, rural school inspector of North Dakota:

"In the 57 consolidated schools that I have visited during the past two years, I have found the work to be much better than in the best rural schools I have been in at any time. Last year I conducted a series of tests in spelling and arithmetic. These were given to the fifth and eighth grades, inclusive, in 30 one-teacher rural schools, 30 graded rural schools, 30 consolidated schools, and 10 city schools. The results are as follows: The grand average in both subjects for the fifth to eighth grades for city schools was 90 per cent.; graded schools, 80; consolidated schools, 80; and rural schools, 55. For the eighth grade alone the grand average for both tests for city schools was 90, for graded schools 80, for the consolidated schools 81, and for the rural schools 43. The pupils in the rural schools were naturally just as bright as those in the other schools; but too many classes for the teacher, poor attendance, and poor teaching had left them far behind. Consolidation will remedy this and other conditions also. Then when we compare the number of boys completing the eighth grade, the graded and the consolidated schools are ahead of the rural school in that they graduate a larger proportion. In the schools inspected it is nearly three times as great, and for the city schools it is seven times as great. Here is the great waste in the rural school. But consolidation improves the grade and quantity of school work and increases the proportion completing the eighth grade."

These are the advantages found from consolidation in the United States:

1. Adequate supervision of the teaching work is made possible through consolidation.
2. Better educational results are obtained through the better division of the pupils' time between recitation and study.
3. Classification becomes possible with all the advantages to the pupil of working in a class of pupils approximately his own age and in the same stage of mental advancement.
4. Vitalizing special subjects such as music, drawing, agriculture, and household arts may be taught in the consolidated school.
5. High-school grades may be easily added to the consolidated school.
6. Pupils gain much education, general culture, and breadth of view from contact with the larger number of pupils met in the consolidated schools.
7. The child's progress is not seriously delayed as in the one-teacher school by the change of teachers. The teaching force in the consolidated school is stable. The entire force seldom changes at the same time. In the one-teacher school the entire teaching force always changes at the same time, and seldom leaves any adequate records behind. The new teacher must classify the pupils on the pupils' own statements of where they belong.

8. Better consolidated schools may have the opportunity to live where they should.

9. A student longer terms attendance, very marketable transportation.

10. The one-teacher school obtained.

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