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Denmark - A Farm Kingdom

V.—The Lesson the Danish System has for Us

By A. McLeod

I have read over the four articles I have written and I will not be surprised if my readers feel like saying to themselves: "That is all very fine but it sounds as unreal as though it were one of Hans Andersen's Danish storica." I confess that it seems to me as if it were a civic fairy tale about some imaginary country that never had a real existence. Indeed, it sounds so absurd that after having written the four articles I have cut out a good many items lest my readers should get a first impression that I was laying on the high colors with too liberal'a pen. The fact is I haven't touched the high spots. I have ridden my pen on the lower levels so that when my readers come to look up statistics and details and authorities they will feel the half has not been told.

The order of growth in rural Denmark has been as follows:—(1) Spiritual education — developing ideas, educing culture and inducing service and trust. (2) Co-operative combination—promoting economic efficiency.

(3) Self-reliant citizenship—functioning altruistically in government of the people by the people themselves.

Education the Foundation

Education the Foundation

The Danish people of half a century ago were in poverty, farming was decadent, the common people were downtrodden, government was in 'the hands of the classes, the country itself was practically bankrupt, the ''black' schools were truly 'schools for death,' culture was limited to a few and there was no health in the body politic. But with modernist schools, education advanced, indeed it came in like a flood; schools were established, men became obscased with ideas, they found speech and expressed their ideas by songue and pen. Then came art and science; the people began to trust each other and the desire for service grew everywhere. Economic co-operation followed in the train of trust, affluence displaced poverty, self-reliance supplanted subserviency, parasitism died a natural death, leisure came to more and more of the people grew naturally into self-government. Today the government of Damark is the most democratic on earth—the people rule themselves in peace and during war. The members of government are of the common people and they rule well.

One of the traditions of class government is that there is some sort of civic efficiency in belonging to the class of professional politicians, that there are diplomatic mysteries that should not be lightly or freely disclosed to the people, that legislation is the prerogative of a few and should be directed to the interests of the few, and that there are diplomatic mysteries that should not be lightly or freely disclosed to the people, that legislation is the prerogative of a few and should be directed to the interests of the few, and that there are diplomatic mysteries that should not be lightly or freely disclosed to the people, that legislation is the prerogative of a few and should be directed to the interests of the few, and that there should be much formality but little life in the passing of legislation. They have emashed this acid test as well as any government in the world. Government is as open as day to the citizens and newspapers. Everything that the gove

interests of some privileged class but to the interests of the common people.

Up From The Depths

Up From The Dopths

To sum up, Denmark was in the depths, her agriculture was decadent, her commerce was small her manufactures were insignificant, her people were poor, inefficient and subservient, the classes ruled; in literature, art, science and government. In a word, in spiritual things, she was weak. In order to overcome all this, she educated her people and she thereby cured all her illa. She established schools for all the children of all the people, living spiritual schools, in which they were taught ideas by the living voice of the teacher, through the instrumentality of the ordinary things, processes and experiences of everyday life. These schools have so educated the people that in one generation Danish agriculture has become the most prosperous on earth, commerce has expanded, manufactures have increased, the common people have become cultured, efficient and self-reliant, they have taken control of government, in literature, art and science they excel and economically, spiritually and politically Denmark occupies a foremost place. She is the most democratic, the most prosperous, of the nations and this has all come through her schools. If she abandoned her distinctive schools to day, she would tomorrow begin to sink into the slough of despond. But she is not abandoning her schools, the is devoting herself more and more to real education and she grows and grows. She is giving as much thought to rearing educated children as we are to raising well-bred cattle, she also raises better cattle than was do.

A Lesson For Us

A Lesson For Us

Do we, the dwellers on the plains, find any lesson to learn in all this? Whether we find it on not the lesson is there and we need to lears it. We have a most fertile soil, we are a young and vigorous people, agriculture is our chief basic industry, and yet at the end of the first generation of farming on the prairies, agriculture is languishing, not from natural causes but from artificial conditions, made for the farmers by privileged interests, which rule the country economically and politically. The farmers are relatively helpless because we are not educated for open-country life. We are clay in the hands of the class potter. We writhe and squirm and grouch but that is all. We cannot assert ourselves, we have not learned how. There it just one way out, by the highway of education. We are schooling our children today as the

Danes did once upon a time, in rural inefficiency we are laying a burden on them which we cannot hear ourselves, and which they will not bear.

We must do what the Danes did, not through imitation of the Danish sohools, but by applying the same principles. We must educate our children for open-country life and to attain that result we must radically change our schools. We will have to root our education in the soil and bring it into spiritual affinity with nature, we will have to teach through the concrete, paing the known facts and expériences of our farm life, we will have to educate the senses, the reason, the judgment, the will, the conscience, through the living voice of the teacher and not merely the memory through the printed page. We must ahandon the greater part of the abstract teaching, by memorizing the typed words of some one cise, about things. We must teach love of the open country, of nature, of rural people and rural things. We must cache how of the judgment by contact, the body by habitation, the reason by reasoning, the judgment by concrete use, the conscience by actual experience, the speech by speaking. We must teach objects not subjects. We will in this teaching of ideas through actual farm things, teach, incidentally and largely without effort, the use of these things. We can throw the most of the pupils' text-books into the fire, but we should replace them with a whole reference library for both pupil and, teacher. We must ahandon two-thirds of our formal written examinations. We must give the teacher liberty.

Teach Farming to Farm Schools

Teach Farming in Farm Schools

Teach Farming to Farm Schools

When we have taught our children ideas and freed their imagination, we must teach them the trade of farming in farm schools. There is no difficulty in making over our schools, that is no objective difficulty. It is easier to teach and learn through the concrete than abstractly, indeed it is a pleasure to so teach and learn. It is not only easier but quicker, cheaper and more effective. But there is subjective difficulty—we will have trouble with ourselves. Our school system is an institution and a traditional institution is hard to change, particularly an institution imbedded in law, sustremethed in practice, encisted in self-interest and ossified in social convention. It is hard for us to change our thought. Besides changing ourselves, we have to take the institution out of the hands of the urban men who control it, who indeed have the effective ownership of it.

The results with us as with the Danes will be a transformation of our life. There will come, through spiritual schools, new ideals, renewed economic conditions, and a complete reversal of our existing governmental traditions and practices. We shall think for ourselves, the appeal of nife, like that of the school, will be to reason not to memory, to service not to selfshaess. The common people will learn to trust them

selves, to cohere and co-operate, there will be as great a change in our economic condition as there has been in Denmark. The people will make their own laws and make them fair to all—government will cease to be class government—no more will a few men with the typewriter and a sheet of paper determine what the economic condition of the farmers is to be.

And there is nothing else that will bring the common people into their own but education. We may write and talk and fume and meet in conventions and pass resolutions and make policies and build platforms but none of these short ents lead to the goal. We must generate dynamic force and education is the spiritual dyname. It is in the eternal nature of things that those who think, rule those who toil and there is nothing is heaven or on carth that will avail us but to learn to think. If everything the people of Denmark have, excepteducation, should be dropped down upon us to-night it would begin to slip away from us before to-morrow's sun would set and we would sink back where we are now. The present generation can learn little, we are tee old, our lot is fixed, but in the name of all that is reasonable and fair and patriotic and manly ang human let us give our children what we have missederand open country education is efficiency. We must change our thought, and determine our course, then we must take the control of our open country schools out of the hands of urgan wholested the country of our open country school system, now when it is no longer possible to ignore the obvious success of these schools, they seek to evade the issue by paltry quibbling. They say the modernist schools, teaching through the concrete, may suit the Galileuns and the Scandinavian open country school system, now when it is no longer possible to ignore the obvious success of these schools, they seek to evade the issue by paltry quibbling. They say the modernist schools, they seek to evade the issue by paltry quibbling. They say the modernist schools, they seek to evade the issue by paltry quibbling. They say the modernist schools, they schools—that is the true test. The schools are the schools are suited to making the children of any one part of the country in terms of rural life under the direction of friends of opin country is to be found and we will then develop the democratic spicif that is characteristic of their agriculture, their c

(Phila)

