

FALSE ECONOMY.

Many districts of school management are being run on a false economy. A recent issue of the Kansas School Journal has an editorial on the subject. It says: "The school question was discussed, stress being laid on the need of securing competent teachers and paying them fair wages. It says: 'Smart school officers who know the difference between schoolkeepers and schoolmasters, and who are so built that they will do as well as they know, and if they feel that they are not competent to decide some school questions will consult those who are and follow the advice they get. Pay better wages for teachers. So long as rural schools will pay no more for teachers than for hired help on the farm it cannot be expected that the brightest and best of your young men and women will remain as teachers in rural schools. So long as the policy of "hiring the cheapest" is pursued the rural schools will have to put up with novices and the incompetent. Stand by the county school commissioners and examiners in maintaining a good standard for teachers and schools. Get rid of the noxious notion that the schools are instituted for the sake of giving somebody a job. Engage good teachers for the year, or for two years, and don't let some town school get such teachers away from you for \$2.50 or \$5 or so a month increase. Stand by the teachers loyally in discipline, management, supplying necessary equipment, etc. Drum the chronic kicker out of the district or drum so loudly for your teachers that the kicker's tin horn and rattle sound strangely silly. Get over the notion that anybody can teach the little folks. Let the rural patron be imbued with the idea that nothing is too good for the rural school. Any district can have as good a school as it is willing and able to pay for and support. Finally let the grange exert its mighty influence in building up a good school sentiment. Select the right kind of officers. Insist on the right kind of teachers. Money is worse than wasted that is spent on a poor teacher. Let liberality, not extravagance, gauge expenses. Banish all nepotism and favoritism in the selection of teachers. Consider the child, not the "influence" of some patron, in the choice of the teacher. Visit the school. Encourage teacher and pupil by your open interest. Make the school the chief center of attraction and power.

RURAL SCHOOLS.

An Ohio Plan of Consolidation Being Widely Followed.

Discussing the advantages which rural populations now enjoy and which their forefathers on the farms never dreamed of, Mr. W. Frank McClure in World's Work tells how the progressive citizens of Kingsville, O., have improved the school system of that community. He says: "In the township of Kingsville, O., the shabby little district schools have been abandoned. Instead there is one handsome central graded school, built, furnished and heated on modern plans. It has five teachers instead of the seven that used to be scattered through the little local schools, and, although the salaries are better, the school taxes have been reduced nearly one-half. Instead of walking a mile or two to the district schools the farmers' children are now carried to the central school in coaches. The coach stops at the home of each pupil, but will not wait if the child is not ready. As a result only one case of tardiness has been reported from the outlying districts in three years. The attendance has increased by from 100 to 150 per cent. The Kingsville system has spread throughout Ohio and Illinois, and has been applied to high schools as well as to grammar schools. It has sent up the value of farm property on the line of the school coaches and almost abolished vacant farmhouses.

Work of an Improvement League.

There is a little town in New Jersey where an improvement league has done more to cleanse and beautify the place, at an expense of less than \$100, than the town council has accomplished by expending thousands of dollars in the ordinary way. The league began by offering prizes for clean back yards and alleys and then for the prettiest vine covered fence, the finest vegetable plot and the most beautiful flowering plant. It enlisted the active interest of the boys and girls and got them to pick up waste paper and such things from the streets to keep the schoolyard neat, and also the vacant lots. In six months' time the town became particularly attractive and clean, and the death rate has perceptibly decreased. The improvement league idea is open to any town.

Beautifying Residential Streets.

Every citizen should aim to encourage in the residence district the planting, cutting and proper care of lawns and the cultivation of shade trees and shrubbery in front of house lawns. Trees should be placed in all parts of the town where they will grow, for no one thing adds more to a town or city's beauty and comfort. The planting of perennial and spring flowering shrubs between trees will add both variety and beauty to the street perspective.

Restoration of Buildings.

The painting of buildings when necessary should be done with the idea of harmony of the entire street, not in such a manner as to call immediate attention to itself. Terra cotta and other ornamental features should not be painted or washed.

ON THE RIGHT COURSE.

Building Improvements Completed at St. Thomas and Other.

It is intensely gratifying to find a number of American cities and towns considering broad plans for improving their appearance, says the Worcester Spy. It is being realized more and more that the construction of a good building here and there does not necessarily mean much so far as the general aspect of a city is concerned. The moment, however, that the relations of buildings to one another begin to be considered by any city or town there is reason to believe that it is on the right course.

Commissioners have been abroad from the city of Washington to study the cities of the old world in order that they might give to the nation's capital the best possible designs for adding to its beauty. Cleveland, O., a city whose residence section is as beautiful as the business section is ugly, is now considering a plan for grouping public buildings, including the federal, municipal and library buildings, to form when the scheme is realized a "grand court of honor." Several new buildings must be built soon, and very wisely it is being considered how each building may best add to the effect of others. Eventually a considerable portion of Cleveland where the buildings, with certain exceptions, are old and bad must be made over, and the present movement toward harmonious arrangement of public buildings, if it is successful, may have an effect reaching further than its advocates dream.

The Chicago exposition has perhaps been the most potent influence toward creating better thought about building that has ever been felt in this country. The Pan-American exposition at Buffalo is also full of suggestion. What these expositions will eventually bring about for American cities and towns is past comprehension. All of the American cities and towns can do much for themselves when once they think more broadly upon questions concerning their adornment. If it is reprehensible for a person to be careless about his appearance, it is infinitely more so for a city or town to be indifferent as to its appearance.

The next fifty years should be a period of rebuilding wherever wrong principles were followed in the first place and particularly where no principle at all was followed. Many a mayor or city council has inaugurated a wise movement for giving beauty to his municipality. The old that is good should be spared and honored. The old that is bad should make room for something better. The thought as to what the leading cities in this great and fertile land may make of themselves is indeed stirring. The time should not be far distant when Europeans coming to these shores must acknowledge that we have cities and towns that appeal just as strongly to the artistic sense as any in their own countries.

BEAUTIFYING TOWNS.

Sealons Co-operation of the Citizens the Essential Thing.

Little can be done to beautify and improve a town without well directed co-operation. The ordinary city, like Topsy, "just grew." Sometimes it grows to quaint picturesqueness, like that which the Nuremberg authorities so jealously conserve; sometimes to rank, squalid ugliness, as in the factory towns, says the Springfield (Mass.) Republican. The danger is that as a town outgrows its village simplicity it will degenerate into commonplace and stupid mediocrity, whereas with but little more cost it might equally well grow into a lovely, harmoniously developed city. But for this there must be unity and intelligence of plan.

To get any large results, then, large plans must be laid. It is necessary to take a fair look into the future. However little can be done at a time that little should be consistent. The services of experts should be called in to lay out harmonious designs, and in public and private affairs alike genuine civic interest, a pride in making the town beautiful, should prevail.

Let us not be frightened by the fear of expense. Beauty is not necessarily costly. The improvement of the town is not a matter of putting up palaces and decorating the squares with monuments. When there is need for an important new building, let us do the thing handsomely and try to make it a work of art. But the larger problem is not one of money, but of interest, care and wisdom. It is a matter of spotless streets and neat dooryards and tastefully designed houses, all the product of refined taste rather than of wealth.

It costs little more to build a tasteful cottage than a vulgar, pretentious sham. Clean streets are a luxury within the means of every city or town that desires them. Disorderly yards are due to negligence, not to poverty. The essential thing is the zealous co-operation of all good citizens.

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