

ket at a fair price. Government regulation is not required to keep this wood in Canada. All that is necessary is that the Canadian mills pay as good a price as their American competitors."

Fairly enough said. It might be somewhat cogently added that the Canadian

manufacturers of newsprint can sell it duty free in the United States. How long would they enjoy this privilege if they succeeded in arbitrarily cutting off the raw material supply, as they are trying to do? One-sided "reciprocity" is hard to maintain, even in the face of a necessity.

Meanwhile it might be stated that, despite the enormous figures of wood-pulp cordage given out, the cut for that purpose is only about three per cent of the annual denudation of forest land. The ax of the lumberman and fuel cutter take the rest.

This Teaching Business

In which a rural educator reveals why hair grows gray

By KARL W. DETZER

A RETIRED farmer on the school board in a small town in Iowa took me to task the other day. I had happened to mention that I once did publicity for a prize-fighter.

"We don't have any prize-fighting in this town," he said, thankfully. "We wouldn't allow it."

From the railroad train the town of B looks as if it were a peaceful little place. It has a population of 1,400. It ships a lot of cattle and hogs to Omaha and Chicago. It has a consolidated school, five churches, one movie, two blocks of stores, and a corn cannery. It also has a school fight.

A school fight is not a pleasant spectacle, nor is it uplifting. It is not polite. Compared with the prize ring, where iron-jawed gentlemen have decreed it foul to hit below the belt, a school fight is a brutal sport. Public opinion is a partisan referee. Most of its jabbing is done below the waist-line—the teacher's waist, usually.

In the town of B it happens to be the somewhat thin waist of my brother-in-law, Pete, who works his eight hours, plus after school and evenings, managing the six-hundred-odd children in this consolidated school district, directing some fourteen other teachers, quelling the big boys, training for declamatory contests, running a basket-ball team, teaching manual training, bossing the bus drivers who tote the country children into town and home again, and doing a hundred other modern educational tasks. Time left the superintendent spends with his school board.

"What's wrong with your board?" I asked, after hearing a tale of woe.

"Nothing wrong with it; it's like all the others I know," Pete told me. "There are two Methodists, one Catholic, one Lutheran, and the preacher of the Peace Evangelical church. It's the Peace preacher this time who's leading the fight."

He wanted Pete to resign, it developed. Also he wanted the scalp of the woman principal of the high school.

"Creed, in his case," Pete answered when I asked him why. "It breaks out the end of every school year. You always hear creeds when small-town school-teachers are elected."

I hadn't known that. I never taught school. Education in a small town is a very complicated business, I discovered. Presidential elections aren't in it. Three Methodists controlled the board in B town until this spring. The Peace preacher defeated one of them for reelection. Before the Methodists it had been Congregationalists; before them, Catholics.

"Half our town is retired farmer," Pete explained. "Most of them are Catholic. They controlled the school board about four years ago and appointed a Catholic superintendent. He was a good man, wide awake. It was he who started the campaign for a new schoolhouse."

"Why didn't he stay?" I wondered. I asked Pete.

"Well," Pete said, "the Lutherans simply went crazy, and so did nearly every one else. They all joined forces and put three Congregationalists on the board. Of course they fired the Catholic superintendent. But they didn't appoint the man the Methodists had picked. So it was only a case of waiting for the Methodists to control the board. Then I got my job, two years ago. I tried to play the middle ground."

Of course I laughed.

"I couldn't," Pete agreed. "I found that out. I started going to the Methodist in the morning, which is my own church. Sunday evenings I attended all the others, in rotation. Fanny [that's his wife] made pies for all the Ladies' Aid suppers. Think she's baked two hundred, actual count."

We were sitting in Pete's office. Children were passing in and out, asking

questions, presenting papers to be signed, borrowing books. A little girl came to the door; about seventh grade, she looked.

"May I go over town before next class?" she asked.

Pete frowned. Nature never meant Pete to frown. He has too friendly a face. I could see now that he wasn't too sure how to answer.

Then he said: "No; sorry."

"My father said you had to let me," the child insisted.

"I said no," Pete repeated.

She pouted. Pete closed the door and started to tell me who she was. Her father was a board member and a doctor. Just at that minute one of the teachers came in.

"Dr. Perkins is inspecting the manual-training rooms," she reported.

Pete and I went down. We found the doctor—the father of the girl who had just asked permission to go to town during school hours. He was an ordinary small-town physician, a good doctor no doubt, who always voted, always went to church.

"Bessie says you would not let her run over town," he began.

"Sorry," said Pete. "It's against the rules for any one to go to town during school hours."

"Look here!" Dr. Perkins put on his eye-glasses. "I'm on your board. I won't have my children refused!"

"Against the rules," said Pete once more, very calmly.

"Then change the rules," retorted Dr. Perkins. "I'll tend to it, next meeting."

He stormed out of the room.

"You see," Pete explained, "I got in bad with him by calling Dr. Burns when young Pete had whooping-cough. I never guessed Perkins would be elected to the board. He's been mad ever since. Tells his children he'll bring me to time, now that he's on the school board. They tell the other children, and I hear it."

We had walked over into the new addition to the school building. Plasterers were busy on the auditorium. It was a fine, big room, airy, light, substantial.

"Splendid!" I told Pete. "I bet the town is proud of this."

"Some of the people are," he admitted. "But there's another pinch. I knew that we needed this auditorium, not only for the school, but for town meetings as well. Everything now has to be held in an old fire-trap they call the opera house—every public meeting that doesn't properly belong in the churches. So I came out flatfooted for a school auditorium."

"It stirred up trouble at once, although we got the auditorium. The fellow who owns the opera house has five brothers here in town and more cousins than you can count. I tell you, he fought! Stirred out his whole family. He makes five dollars a night renting his hall. Once we get a free meeting-place, there'll be less business. So he got his father-in-law on the school board. His father-in-law's the Lutheran. The retired farmers got behind him, some of them, because they didn't want to put up any more school

tax. They called it a fight against additional taxes; but behind that was a fight to make five dollars a meeting for the owner of the opera house."

All these things Pete told me, and many others. He explained that the principal of the school had invited some neighbors in for tea at her own home one afternoon, and that certain women were not invited. No snub had been intended. But a battalion of deeply injured and extremely vocal citizens were demanding now that the principal be turned out into the cold because she was not democratic. She wouldn't be re-elected.

No one mentioned her ability to teach. One crowd howled to have both principal and superintendent removed, others fought to retain them. They walked up one side of Main Street and down the other, campaigning. They discussed everything in the world except the moral character of the man and woman involved and their ability as educators.

"After all," I said to Pete, "no one charges that you aren't a good superintendent. No one says that Miss Phipps is a poor principal."

"Of course not," Pete answered, looking surprised.

"These people seem rather proud of their school."

"Oh, yes," agreed Pete.

"Then what's all this rowing and talking got to do with reading and arithmetic?"

"Nothing at all," answered Pete, "nothing at all."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"I believe," he said, "that I'll run up to Solon Center. They've ousted their man up there and are looking for a new one. I ought to get the job."

"What's the matter with that man?" I asked.

"There's a Democratic school board, and the present superintendent is a Republican," Pete said. "He was down here the other day, and I think he'll get this job. You see, his sister's husband is caretaker at the Peace church, here in B."

"What's that got to do with education?" I inquired again.

"Nothing at all," he admitted.

Long lines of children were trailing up and down stairs.

"Come in here," said Pete, "and listen to these seniors. It's the class on civics and government."

An East Side American

The Autobiography of a Son of the City

By CHARLES STELZLE

CHARLES STELZLE has appeared in many rôles. A brewer's son, a tenement district boy, a runner of errands, tobacco stripper, newsboy, cutter of artificial flowers, machinist, street preacher and minister, have been among the parts which he has

played. When he was called to testify before the Special Committee of the United States Senate on April 21 about prohibition, he was classed as a surveyor. In this issue he tells the kind of a surveyor he is and how he earned that title.

X

The Facts About Surveys

MAKING surveys was an utterly thankless job, because a diagnosis of a city was not for the purpose of discovering its good points so much as it was to find out what in the city's life needed remedying. When reports were made to citizens, usually in public meetings, the facts produced were not especially complimentary. This often created feeling.

Survey work was an outstanding accomplishment growing out of the Presbyterian Department of Church and Labor, which I headed. Not only were the fields of local churches studied and recommendations made as to the kind of work which should be conducted, but

entire cities and counties and States were surveyed, covering social, economic, and religious institutions.

One of the most successful surveys was that made for the Men and Religion Forward Movement, which was conducted by the combined Protestant churches and other religious enterprises of the United States. Seventy principal American cities with a combined population of twenty millions were studied during the winter of 1911 in preparation for the campaign conducted by that movement during the following year. About one thousand questions were addressed to the local committees in charge of the surveys in each of the cities, cov-

ering, among other things, population, municipal administration, social influences, housing, health, political life, social service agencies, public schools, libraries, recreational life, juvenile delinquency, and the general condition of the churches.

Sometimes there was a disposition to fight back when survey figures were published. But invariably whatever statements were made on the platform could be substantiated by statistics or other data which had been secured by trained investigators.

For example, in a city in northern New Jersey a mass-meeting was called for Sunday afternoon in a large theater