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THE Balkcom Drug Company

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And All Articles Found in a First-Class Drug Store.



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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA.

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FLORIDA NEEDS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

As the business of the State increases so does the need of a constitutional convention.

The State has outgrown the legal garb forced upon it in 1885, and the attempt to make the constitutional structure built at that date bear the burden of today is a source of vexation and a detriment to the principles of democracy upon which the government rests.

A makeshift affair at best, a compromise in which contending elements struggled in the effort to incorporate theories or doctrines of varying factions and parties, the Constitution adopted in 1885, was, perhaps, the best that could be formulated at that time.

Since then patch after patch, in the form of amendments, have been placed on it, for the purpose of covering gaps of deficiency and strengthening the tottering legal edifice, until such a jumble remains that it might well be called a jungle of legal embarrassment.

The sole remedy is a constitutional convention.

It has become the fashion of Democrats to laud Thomas Jefferson. To speak of the man of Monticello is equivalent to naming the source from which the Democratic party has risen.

Jeffersonian doctrines are proclaimed by every Democratic stump speaker, dinners are given in remembrance of the anniversary of his birth, pages are written of what Jefferson would have done in certain events, yet when the opportunity is at hand to do what Jefferson said to do, his advice is ignored.

Here is the Jeffersonian doctrine concerning constitutional conventions. This, from a letter written by him in 1816, plainly shows the way to the people if they wish to keep in the pathway of representative government:

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them, like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well: I belonged to it; and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present; and forty years of experience in government is worth a century of book-reading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead. I am certainly not an advocate for frequent and untried changes in laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections should be borne with; because, when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them and find practical means of correcting their ill effects. But I know, also, that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat that fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors. It is this preposterous idea which has lately deluged Europe with blood. Their monarchs, instead of wisely yielding to the gradual changes of circumstances, of favoring progressive improvement, have clung to old abuses, entrenched themselves behind steady habits, and obliged their subjects to seek through blood and violence rash and ruinous innovations, which, had they been referred to the peaceful deliberations and collected wisdom of the nation, would have been put into acceptable and salutary forms. Let us follow no such examples, nor weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another in taking care of itself and of ordering its own affairs. Let us, as our sister States have done, avail ourselves of our reason and experience to correct the crude essays of our first and unexperienced, although wise, virtuous and well-meaning councils. And, lastly, let us provide in our constitution for its revision at stated periods. What these periods should be, nature herself indicates. By the European tables of mortality, of the adults living at any one moment of time, a majority will be dead in about nineteen years. At the end of that period, then, a new majority is come into place; or, in other words, a new generation. Each generation is independent of the one preceding, as that was of all gone before. It has, then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of

W. R. Wilson

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