

CURRENT TOPICS

THE SHIP PURCHASE BILL

In a speech in behalf of the administration ship purchase bill, delivered before the Commercial club of Chicago, January 9, Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo briefly summarized the essential features of the bill which is now engrossing the attention of congress, as follows:

"The essential features of the shipping bill are the organization of a private shipping corporation with a capital stock of \$10,000,000, 51 per cent of which is to be subscribed by the government and the remainder is to be offered to public subscription. If the public does not subscribe, the government will take all of the stock. A shipping board is created, consisting of the secretary of the treasury, the postmaster general, and the secretary of commerce. This board is to have the voting power on the government stock and general supervision over the shipping corporation. The active management of the corporation will, however, be conducted by its board of directors and officers, just as the affairs of the Panama Railroad company are conducted by its officers and directors, under the general supervision of the war department. Although the government owns the entire capital stock of the Panama Railroad company, that company has, as is well known, long operated successfully a line of steamships between New York and the Canal Zone.

"In addition to the \$10,000,000 of capital stock of the proposed shipping corporations, \$30,000,000 of Panama canal bonds, now in the treasury, may be sold and the proceeds used for the purchase or construction of ships, which are to be turned over to the proposed corporation in consideration of a like amount of its 4 per cent bonds, which are to be held by the treasurer of the United States and sold at the discretion of the government. The act authorizes the transfer to the new corporation of the ships of the Panama Railroad company and any vessels belonging to the war and naval establishments suitable for commercial purposes, and not required by the army or navy in time of peace, upon terms to be approved by the president of the United States.

"These are the salient features of the bill. It will be observed that the government does not engage in the shipping business; it is merely a stockholder, or the only stockholder, in a private corporation engaged in such business. The officers and directors of the corporation will be chosen for their ability and knowledge of the shipping business, and the corporation will be managed like any other well-conducted business enterprise or organization. There is no reason why such a corporation can not be made just as successful as any other privately managed shipping corporation."

AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT

The people of Dallas, Texas, with the aid of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Byron N. Newton, are to try an experiment in reducing the high cost of living. Recently, Mr. Newton granted permission to Dallas municipal authorities to make use of vacant property in that city owned by the government, to be used under certain restrictions, as an open-air market. Concerning this market, a Washington dispatch of recent date says:

"The site comprises an entire square and is situated near the principal residence section, giving an ideal location for market purposes. It was purchased by the government a year ago for \$250,000, and in the ordinary procedure would remain unoccupied until the government is prepared to erect a building there several years hence.

"In granting permission to the mayor and council of Dallas to use the site for market purposes, it was stipulated that the market should be free and that the city should maintain proper police control of the place and keep it in sanitary condition.

"Under this arrangement, farmers and truck gardeners will be able to place their products on sale without the payment of market fees, and opportunity will be afforded residents to purchase

their table supplies direct from the producers.

"If the experiment works well, it may be taken up in other localities, as there are several hundred unoccupied sites for post-office buildings in cities and towns throughout the country. On many of these sites it will be impossible for the government to erect buildings for a period of from one to five years.

"Speaking of the matter, Mr. Newton said: "The people of Dallas want to try this experiment. I do not know that it will result in any modification of prices, but if it, in some degree, lightens the household burdens, the experiment certainly will be worth the effort.

"I do not know where the trouble lies, but somewhere on the road between the farm and the city kitchen something happens that makes all products of the farm and garden extremely expensive.

"This has been a year of abundant crops. I am informed that within a few miles of Washington, apples are rotting in the orchards and that there is an abundance of potatoes and all kinds of produce required for our tables; yet, when we purchase these products in the city we find prices at high-water mark.

"I suppose similar conditions exist in Dallas, and it will be interesting to watch the effort to bring the farm and the kitchen a little closer."

"In several towns recently Assistant Secretary Newton has granted permission for the use of vacant government building sites for playgrounds and children's gardens."

TRAINED RURAL TEACHERS

Proper courses of training for rural teachers and the intelligent use of the country schoolhouse as a civic center were pronounced the great needs of rural education in this country, at a recent national conference on the subject held in Chicago. A further report of this conference says:

"An investigation has shown that 32.7 per cent of the rural teachers in the United States have no professional training for their work; while perhaps a majority are inadequately prepared. Rural education is regarded by leading educators as the crux of education problems in this country. To give the country child educational opportunities equal to those enjoyed by the city child is the great educational need of this country.

"The first step is to raise the standard of teaching, and to this end the conference recommends that special courses in rural teaching be given in state and private normal schools; that agricultural colleges fit their students to teach manual training, and home economics, and that they emphasize the importance of vocational training; and that all high schools maintain teacher training classes.

"By thus offering educational opportunities and establishing a definite standard of rural education, it is hoped to create a class of rural teachers who will be trained for their professions, and will be able to impart the practical vocational instruction which is so much needed in rural districts.

"The conference expresses the opinion that school houses should be used as polling places, and as forums for public discussion, under the supervision of an officer of the school."

A PLEA FOR THE COMMON MAN

Character, not greatness, as the real aim in life, was emphasized by William A. McKeever, professor of child welfare at the University of Kansas, in a recent lecture before the Kansas City School of Social Service. Professor McKeever made the following declarations in his address:

"We have gone on talking and writing about the two-fifths of humanity that are misfits until we have come to believe that there is no good at all in the human race.

"We have emphasized greatness until it has engendered a fierce and inhuman struggle for the few places of greatness. Greatness strives for a place for itself. Goodness strives, too, but not for self alone. Goodness says: 'Come on, there's room for all.' The new interpretation

of human life is a matter of a good and richly developed character.

"The old definition of human life says that land, houses and money make a man wealthy. The new definition says personality is wealth. The human race is after all one. We are all practically thirty-second cousins. There is no such thing as caste, or rank, or race.

"If humanity is to be unified in thought and purpose as it now is in nature, this unifying process must come through the development of child life. When we come to love our children—not just your own, but anybody's rag, tag and all—we will have discovered the unifying process of humanity.

"Whenever I go to a strange city there are those of the citizens who will always point out the skyscrapers, the banks, the big stores and the homes of the notables of the town. 'So-and-so grew up here,' they will say proudly.

"But what about your common people?' I ask. 'Didn't they grow up here? How about the man sent to the penitentiary? Didn't he grow up here?' 'Oh, he's none o' mine,' will come the answer. He is one of ours, though. If he had had the proper environment and sympathy he might never have become a criminal."

IT CAN STILL BE DONE

The story of how John B. Kendrick, the new democratic governor of Wyoming and a native of Texas battled his way from an orphaned boy and cow puncher to governor of a great western commonwealth, contains an inspiring lesson to every American boy. Commenting on his career, a writer in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch says:

"What pessimist said romance had been banished and the poor boy's chances abolished by a corporation-controlled civilization?

"It was a mistake. John B. Kendrick, a penniless orphan boy, trailed a bunch of cattle from Texas to Wyoming, got a job riding herd, became ranch foreman, saved some money and borrowed more, bought a few cows, cared for the increase, learned to trade shrewdly, became a millionaire and now has rounded out his career by an election to the governorship of his adopted state."

"There is, we are assured, 'no taint upon a single dollar of his.'

"An honor graduate of the College of Hard Knocks, which maintains no football team and omits the courses in tango dancing, cigaret smoking and spats, but still turns out some highly creditable young men."

MR. BRYAN'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY

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grateful to those who have given to this movement enthusiastic support, and who, so many years before we were born, realized that there was a higher plane than the plane of physical force upon which to settle international differences. Their labors have not been in vain. We shall not know the names of all, nor shall we be able to estimate with accuracy the contribution that each has made. But what difference does it make? What if the world does not know? He who from a worthy motive strives for a noble cause is not concerned whether others know what he does or speak words of praise; it is sufficient for him that he has done his part and lived up to the opportunities that have come to him.

It takes the work of all to accomplish the total result. A few years ago my wife and I visited the Grand Canyon in Arizona. We went down 4,600 feet from the top of the Canyon to where the Colorado river winds its way, and there we saw evidence of the action of the waters through the ages. As we looked upon that stream, I wondered how many drops of water had found their way through that Canyon. No arithmetic would enable us to compute them; neither could we tell just what influence each one had had—it was the work of all. And so with every great movement—it is the work, not of one, or of a few, but of the multitude. I am glad to be with those who, as a part of the multitude, are working for peace.