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SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1923

The Governor's Transportation Bill.

The transportation bill introduced in the Legislature at the request of the governor, and providing for a boat line and North Carolina terminals, is carefully drawn and shows that the governor is proceeding cautiously in the matter, and is not going to hazard the reputation and finances of the state in an untried enterprise without a thorough investigation. The act provides for the appointment of a commission and imposes upon that commission the duty of making a thorough investigation of the facts pertaining to every feature of the undertaking. After this is done the commission reports to the council of state which must finally decide whether the state will undertake this enterprise. If it so decides the state is authorized to issue the necessary bonds to buy the vessels, acquire terminals, and do such other things as may be necessary to put the line in operation.

After this investigation the state ought to be able to determine whether it can successfully operate these boat lines without loss to the state and with advantage to the public as a whole. If we assume that the state can properly engage in all kinds of business, which we have never been quite reconciled to notwithstanding the general tendency of public opinion, the next question is whether this business may be engaged in at a loss of money, or only in case it is profitable. Of course nobody will contend that public officials may conduct a business at a loss to the state when such business may be made to pay or may be discontinued. The governor's bill is broad enough to authorize the carrying on of this business or its discontinuance, and if the business can not be carried on successfully the people of the state would not tolerate operations at a loss.

We think the bill would be strengthened if it contained a provision requiring the commission to set aside from the earnings of the enterprise a sufficient amount of money to pay the interest on the debt and to create a sinking fund to pay off the debt when due, because the state is not justified in engaging in an enterprise which is not self-sustaining any more than an individual would be. On the whole we think that the act is well drawn and is cautiously conceived, and that the council of state and the commission to be appointed may be trusted to handle this matter with discretion.

Unofficial Observers.

By common consent Senator Reed, of Missouri, is recognized as a man of a certain order of ability; but nothing short of the rankest sort of partisanship could mistake his biting invective for statesmanship. Reed began his public career as a district prosecuting officer, and it would have been well for the reputation of his country if his political activities had been confined to the sphere for which his abilities so eminently qualified him. He was the outstanding democrat who opposed ratification of the Versailles Treaty, and it is quite possible that except for his alliance with Lodge, the treaty might have been ratified in some acceptable though modified form. In the arena of the Senate his usefulness is distressingly limited. His constructive faculty is of a very low

order, and his criticisms are always and invariably bitterly destructive. He is gifted with a certain sort of imagination, the kind which can paint sunsets, waterfalls and humming bird wings, but is utterly lacking in the higher attributes of imagination which visualize human rights and aspirations and sufferings. He has never been able to work himself out of the traditional trough of national isolation, and has remained, and always will remain, a stranger to the intimacy of contact and interest brought about by modern world developments. Being in himself an apostrophe to isolation it is natural to find him again playing the role of the last of the guards. Borah has deserted him, Capper has deserted him, and every man of vision and unbiased prejudices must desert him.

Reed's last demand in his isolation program is for the Senate to adopt a resolution disapproving the presence of unofficial observers at foreign conferences; notwithstanding that these observers are their ambassadors or other representatives of this government, and that their informal part in these conferences enhances their usefulness to their country. We send representatives abroad for the purpose of keeping our government advised about foreign happenings, and the status of a foreign representative is of itself a repudiation of the extreme doctrine of isolation. If this country could live alone and apart from the world, it would not be necessary to concern ourselves with world happenings or send our representatives abroad to express our views and protect our rights; and were we to follow Reed's policy to his logical conclusion, we would not have a representative in a foreign land for fear that something might happen to embroil us in foreign entanglements.

France's and Germany's Positions.

Under the Versailles Treaty the right is reserved to any of the allied and associated powers to take forcible possession of German territory if necessary to enforce economic demands, when and if the Reparations Commission declare Germany to have willfully defaulted in carrying out its engagements. The stipulation is clear so there can be no doubt of France's legal right to the step she has taken in occupying the Ruhr section with her economic forces adequately sustained by the military. Great Britain and the United States do not contest France's legal right, but gravely doubt the expediency of the step taken. The last word spoken by Bonar Law when taking leave of Poincare in Paris was that he hoped the French position would prove to be right, but that he could not dismiss his doubts; and Secretary Hughes' views, as far as they are known, are not essentially different.

The course being pursued by France follows closely that of Bismarck when the German forces occupied France in 1871, so it does not lay with Germany to complain that France's policy is something new and unprecedented. The "defying" of force is admittedly the work of the Germans, and during the early years of the war force was the German slogan. It will be recalled that when President Wilson felt constrained to ask Congress to declare war, he parried the German menace with the statement that, having put our hand on the plow, we would run the furrow by the application of force without stint, force without limit; and this is what won the war. It is to be regretted, but the truth stands out too clearly to be denied, that German psychology yields to nothing but force; nor will it be denied that Germany has fallen far short of fulfilling her engagements under the treaty, and that the devastated areas of France have been restored practically at the expense of French revenues. We can well imagine French irritation at Germany's failure, and at what appears to be the want of will to pay the penalty of her misdeeds; and both Great Britain and the United States seem to be willing to let France try out her experiment before offering further their good offices for solving the problem in some practical way. The belief seems to be fast crystallizing that the crisis must of its own force work out some practical adjustment.

But the position which Germany takes with reference to the invasion of the Ruhr by the French is a rather anomalous one. Germany contends that in as much as France has entered Germany for the purpose of collecting the indemnities which Germany had promised to pay, she, France, has violated the treaty and thereby released Germany from any payment of the indemnities agreed to in the treaty. We are not prepared to speak as to the wisdom of France's invasion of Germany for the collection of this indemnity. However, we cannot follow the logic of Germany when she admits owing France and being unable to pay, and then saying that she is released from payment because France

endeavors to collect that which is due. If a debtor who refuses to pay could plead a breach of contract because a creditor attempts to collect, it would be a rather easy matter to dispose of our liabilities. We doubt that France will gain anything by entering Germany, but we cannot find it in our hearts to call her to task for an effort to collect the indemnity to which she is justly entitled. The further we get away from the war the easier it is to excuse the aggressor, but France has suffered more than any other party to the conflict and we look upon her efforts to collect the indemnity with a spirit of sympathy if not approval.

The Seduction Bill.

The bill introduced in the legislature, backed by the State Federation of Women's Clubs, changing the rule of proof in cases of seduction under the promise of marriage does not receive our commendation. We know the purposes and intentions of the promoters of this law are perfectly sincere, but it is the wisdom of changing the statute which we dispute. The present law provides that the unsupported testimony of the woman is not sufficient to convict one charged with seduction under the promise of marriage. This statute has been in force in North Carolina for nearly forty years, and was passed, not for the purpose of protecting the guilty, but to prevent blackmail of the innocent. The law only requires supporting testimony in order to convict the defendant, but saves the jury the embarrassment of guessing where the only testimony on the one hand is that of a woman who may be a vicious woman and of a man who may be a perfectly innocent man, or vice versa. The statute was precautionary and intended as a safeguard. The requirements of proof supporting testimony are very liberal. A letter or other circumstances would be sufficient, and almost invariably such could be produced if the charges are true; but the proposed change in the law would permit a vicious woman to swear an innocent man into prison or disgrace even if he were to truthfully testify he had never seen her.

We remember something of rules of evidence fixed under the Jewish law, evidenced by no better authority than the Old Testament, which ought to be to some extent persuasive to those who still believe in such established principles: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."

But when Joseph departed from the home of his race and became a slave in Egypt he was no longer protected by the Hebrew law and fell into the hands of the heathen Egyptians, whose laws required no "supporting testimony." We recall the malicious story that Potiphar's wife designed against Joseph, and thereby cast him into prison. If the Hebrew law could have been applied, or even if the Statute in North Carolina, which has been so great a safeguard for forty years, could have been resorted to, Potiphar's wife would have been required to produce some testimony supporting her evidence before she could have cast Joseph into prison. We like progress and we wish to see the State of North Carolina go ahead; but we are afraid that we are too prone to forget the land marks of the past and to refuse to be guided by the principles which have so long served the human race. Statutory morals have not so far been able to correct faults to which humankind is addicted, and we hardly expect any panacea for the wrongs that we complain of other than the development of a high moral character and the clinging to the standards of our fathers. Now that the judiciary committee of the house has reported this bill unfavorably, we think that it should sleep where it is, because any effort to pass it should not be successful and its advocates can gain nothing by pressing it.

Resistance By Obstinacy.

About all that France must expect to get out of her military foray into the Ruhr basin will be a kind of spectacular revenge, if the German policy of "passive resistance" is to be carried out. In the Reichstag, at Berlin on Thursday, Chancellor Cuno informed the foreign affairs committee that "Germany's reparations obligations would cease to be discharged in further dealings with the treaty breaking powers," meaning France, Belgium and Italy. That seems to indicate on its face that Germany has repudiated her reparations debt to France, and the first step towards it was Chancellor Cuno's announcement that the transportation of coal on the reparations account ceased at 9 o'clock Thursday morning, by order of the German government. If this means anything, the significance of it is that the Germans have decided to resist by stubbornness instead of by force. She refuses to quit making payments on her reparations debt, and France may get reparations if she can by her costly occupation plan. The German government not only refuses to pay any more reparations, and will refuse to pay the cost of France's military venture into the Ruhr basin or any other portion of Germany. That is all quite pertinent to the circumstances that the temporary moratorium granted to Germany expires by limitation tomorrow. Her dues of 500,000,000 gold marks is payable tomorrow, but Germany has already announced that she has stopped paying reparations and is through with "further dealings with the treaty breaking powers." In the meantime, a Paris dispatch in yesterday's papers announced that the reparations commission will grant Germany until February 1 to make her indemnity payment of 500,000,000 gold marks. The inference is that Germany will not even offer to make any effort to make a payment tomorrow. This granting of two weeks more time to Germany to make a money payment is said to have been on account of a request from France, so as to give France more time to prepare new moratorium conditions. However, it is believed in Paris that "the increasing indication of passive resistance by Germany to the French occupation of the Ruhr has much to do with it."

France, for the first time, seems to begin to realize that she is up against it. According to the German view, France underrated the magnitude of her collection scheme in the Ruhr, since it is agreed that unless the Germans co-operate with her in operating the coal mines and other industries she can not do so to any advantage herself. The French admit it themselves and are making efforts to secure co-operation from German operators of the coal mines and iron industries. Possibly, the mine and factory operators may be willing to co-operate, but the German government itself offers obstinate opposition and the much larger question will be Germany's decision to repudiate payment of her cash indemnity duetomorrow.

That is a situation which might compel France to annex the Ruhr, which the Germans are satisfied is France's real object. She has not kept her big army for fear of Germany, but for the purpose of enforcing the Versailles peace treaty in the French way. Great Britain saw what it was all leading to, so she left France, Belgium and Italy to make the venture. Uncle Sam realized the ominous meaning of it all and recalled his troops from the danger zone. Now, it is said, in yesterday's dispatches, Premier Poincare hopes to arrange a meeting with the Germans to which would be invited Great Britain, Belgium, Italy and perhaps the United States. In that event we may expect more "isolation." France might make such an invitation, one not at all enticing to the Washington government.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS.

A GIGANTIC IRRIGATION PLAN

In the southwestern corner of the United States is an undeveloped empire. Experience in the Imperial Valley has demonstrated that the section will have great fertility when it is brought under irrigation. Yet that valley is but one small part of an immense domain susceptible of agricultural exploitation with the help of water. The water is there in such abundance as to be a menace. The trouble is that the precious liquid is not on tap and under control, and that it rushes off in periodic floods which menace the areas already reclaimed. The Imperial Valley and many other valleys in that section lie below sea level. The Colorado river flows above them towards the sea in a silt-made channel built a little higher each year with the detritus brought down from the southwestern Rockies. Consequently, when the river breaks its banks the result is a deluge. Salton Sea, hundreds of miles long, is one the turbid Colorado's unwelcome gifts to the southwest; and that inundation would have engulfed the whole Imperial Valley except for millions spent by the federal government and the Southern Pacific railroad. Engineering science despairs of making the Colorado river a safe and friendly stream by efforts applied to its lower reaches. Consequently there is a plan now under consideration to build a huge dam far to the north, where the river issues from the mountain. That is its point of highest saturation; thence it loses water through evaporation and leakage. Sponsors for the plan set forth that this dam would impound the largest bulk of merchantable water collectible anywhere in America, that by its aid untold millions of desert acres could be brought into cultivation, and, furthermore, that this development, far from destroying any natural beauties would change for the better the character of the most desolate part of the United States. Below the Grand Canyon the Colorado makes no pretensions to beauty; and except for irrigation and power purposes it appears to have no utility either. No ports dot its shores; the river can make no contribution to the world's commerce, except by growing the vegetables and fruits carried to market by steam transport. The Colorado comes to the sea, amid a vast confusion of sandbars, in the steaming Gulf of California, shut off from the Pacific by a desert peninsula, and hence closed for practical purposes to ocean travel. In view of all the physical conditions, this new plan of control for the most unruly of all America's great rivers should appeal to the country in spite of its great initial cost and the distance of the river from important centers of population. —New York Evening Post.

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IT IS SUNDAY MORNING

BY W. A. STANBURY

SALARIES AND SOULS

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."—Luke 12:15.

Many good people have held that it is a virtue to despise property and to smother the instincts of the body and the temporal life. Consequently, they have gone to live in monasteries and convents, shut in from the distractions of the world, shut up to meditation and prayer. It is reported that at a certain monastery in Kentucky there are men so completely out of the world, that they know nothing of the events which have changed the whole face of human society in the last eight years.

There is only one mistake worse than this and that is to hold, with much of modern literature, and with no little of modern living, that man's life is summed up and included in possessions, and in the things of sense. A little excursion into popular fiction or into the story of life as depicted on the movie screen will reveal that for the most part, the dominant ideas are these: Wealth, Power, the Sensual. And in much of it, the first two exist as a means to the last.

In a day one of the least of whose activities is real thinking, this is not strange. It is easy to be a creature of the obvious. We respond instantaneously to the stimulus of the concrete. Money and the things it will buy, the flesh and its gratifications, do not have to offer proof with their appeal. They speak straight to the senses. Their worst danger lies in what they conceal, in what they blind men to. Jesus speaks of "the deceitfulness of riches."

They promise to bring an accession of life; but they do not, save when they are made life's servant, not its master. For life,

as human beings ought to know it has a depth that salaries and wealth can not fathom, is something higher than the conceptions of it obtaining in Hollywood.

If you should ask the inhabitants of that city their idea of life, the answer would be in terms of revels, and \$25,000 automobiles—and the answer of countless others, in high station and in low, would not differ essentially.

But if you should ask the spirit of Louis Pasteur, the 100th anniversary of whose birth has just been commemorated, the reply would be in terms of sterilized milk for babies, and of the cure and prevention of human suffering. And if you ask Matthew Arnold, born also 100 years ago, he will answer in his own words:

"Children of men! not that your age excel
In pride of life the ages of your sires;
But that you too feel deeply,
Bear fruit well,
The Friend of man desires."

There is nobody who knows better the poverty of riches, or the importance of income to produce the deep, inward, real worth and joy of life, than those who have been disillusioned by experience. And there is nothing sadder than the sadness who have thought to satisfy their souls on salaries and purchases, and have come, too late, to see their folly.

Truly, it is only the fool, who thinks he can feed his soul on goods. Jesus, who knew life all the way through, said, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Not in possessions, but in soul, does the abundance of life consist.

FORECAST BY STATES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13.—Virginia: Increasing cloudiness and warmer, followed by rain Sunday; Monday fair. North and South Carolina: Cloudy and warmer Sunday; showers Sunday night; Monday fair; fresh southeast and south winds. Georgia: Cloudy and warmer Sunday;

showers by Sunday night; Monday fair and cooler; fresh southerly winds. Florida: Partly sunny; warmer in extreme northeast portion; Monday fair, fresh east to south winds. Extreme northwest Florida, Alabama and Mississippi: Cloudy Sunday; showers in the interior; Monday fair and cooler; fresh southerly winds.



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