

AN HONOUR FLAG.

Secretary W. G. McAdoo of the United States Treasury is to present an honour flag to every city, town and village that exceeds its quota in the next liberty loan. As an emblem of patriotic service such a flag will be worth striving for and no doubt local pride will see to it that the local quota is exceeded, for that flag must be flown from the city or town hall. Such an idea of a flag and such an appeal is characteristically American and the municipalities will rise to it. In this each community will realize that it is doing something for the great national cause and is being appreciated accordingly, and good results only can accrue. Secretary McAdoo terms his presentation flag an "Honour" flag and it is well named for though two huge liberty loans have already been more than fully subscribed for it was certainly not the amount of the interest that attracted the American subscribers, the said interest being less than four per cent. It was really practical patriotism and the same term can apply to the next national loan which we understand will bear the same low rate of interest.

The thought came to our mind while we were examining the beautiful picture of the McAdoo Honour flag and all that it implies, that such an emblem, or a similar one, could be made to serve an equally useful purpose in Canada. Not that any flag is necessary to create Canadian loyalty and patriotism. It is there and always has been, as has been so magnificently shown in every one person out of 14 of her population coming forward to take up arms in the present war or over half a million combatants. But when we come to examine local records we find that there is a difference of spirit in communal patriotism. We find that before conscription came in, certain communities had not only given every man fit to serve but every dollar it could raise. Such communities deserve special recognition at the hands of the nation and though a flag may not cost much it can and would in many cases signify to the relatives that their boys' services and sacrifices were appreciated and to the community such a flag given under conditions and for such a purpose would be for all time an emblem of pride.

PROPOSAL FOR A MUNICIPAL BUREAU OF VACANT HOUSES IN CITIES.

To assist those who are in need of suitable housing accommodation, a Municipal Housing Bureau might prove of great value. At such a bureau a register might be kept of all vacant houses and apartments, with full particulars as to the accommodation, rental, etc. Photographs of the houses would not necessarily be required but would frequently be supplied, and this would be a further advantage in facilitating a suitable selection of houses, and limiting the time spent in examination. In cases where houses are in great demand, registration at the bureau might be made obligatory. A small charge (probably not exceeding twenty-five cents) made for each registration would cover the cost of administration. By this means workmen could learn without difficulty, expense, or loss of time, the condition of the housing market in all parts of the city. The advantages which would result from having this information are obvious. The number of houses available at each rate of rental would indicate from time to time either a surplus or deficiency of particular types, and in this way the bureau would be of value to build-

MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVES AND M.P.'S.

There has been much discussion lately as to whether or not municipal executives can also be members of parliament. Frankly we do not believe that any man has a moral right to attempt to serve in both the local and federal parliaments at the one time even if he has the legal right, particularly when a payment is attached to both offices—we use the term payment advisedly for indemnity (the term used respecting the payment of members of parliament) means to those who would evade the spirit of the law relating to dual offices anything but salary or wages. No man can be in Ottawa and his own city or town at the same time, and while it might be possible at times for some members of parliament to better serve the country by staying in their home town, no municipal executive can do justice to the citizens of the city or town in which he is an officer, whether elected or appointed. Municipal government is too intense to-day to allow it to be divided with either provincial or federal affairs, and the sooner stringent provincial legislation is enacted stopping this growing pernicious system of one man holding two or more public offices the better.

THE FORUM.

On page 110 the Forum makes its first appearance. Its success is wrapped up in the personality of its conductor (Mr. Howard Ross, K.C.), who is known throughout this Continent where students of civic affairs meet. To our readers Mr. Ross has already made his bow in a number of excellent articles, and it was to secure a continuation of his ideas on government that we induced him to conduct a "Forum" in the columns of this Journal. The word "Forum" signifies, a place or medium where men can express their ideas openly and frankly, but under Mr. Ross our Forum will also mean constructive thinking, progressive ideas and civic building.

Mr. Ross is something more than a man of theory and fine phrases. He is practical. For a number of years he was an alderman in his native province of Nova Scotia, so that he knows something of the difficulties of local government. He knows the legal difficulties the local councils are up against, so that whatever viewpoint he takes on a particular subject, the reader of the Forum will feel that Mr. Ross is sympathetic towards the practical administration of the municipalities.

ers, and the supply of houses of all types could be more nearly equated to the demand. Housing conditions would no longer be the subject of uninformed discussion. Information as to the true condition would be always available. The evils of unfairly high rentals in one district would be overcome if vacant buildings were available in another equally satisfactory district. The registration form might require information as to sanitary conveniences and interior decoration. The effect of this would be to improve the general condition of the houses, as those in the best condition would, of course, secure tenants most speedily.

As one of the objects is to save the time of those for whom time is money, the regulation requiring registration might apply only to moderate and low-priced houses. The task of securing a new home generally falls upon the mother of the household, and not infrequently this involves a weary task of walking about from place to place carrying the youngest member of the family and neglecting pressing home duties. This could be largely obviated by a carefully planned system of public registration of vacant houses.—G.F.B.