

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

DEATH OF SOUTH AFRICAN MAYOR.

The death occurred in London, Eng., last month, of Mr. A. W. Guthrie, Mayor of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, since 1912. The late Mr. Guthrie founded the firm of Guthrie & Co., railway carriage contractors, and became a wealthy man as a result of his own strenuous efforts.

ARBOR DAY IN SPAIN.

For several years an arbor day has been observed in Spain, with such satisfactory results that recently the Spanish Government has taken the matter in hand and declared the annual celebration obligatory throughout the kingdom. The municipal or town councils are directed to invite all the local authorities, associations and unions, both official and private, to participate in the ceremonies, and the various councils must enter in their estimates for current expenses for each succeeding year such amount as they consider necessary for the purchase of land, for irrigation, or for other indispensable disbursements in connection with the tree planting. The governors of provinces cannot approve an estimate for any city or town unless it specifies some amount to be devoted to arbor day. An account of the celebration, mentioning the date of the festivity, the number of trees planted, the number of persons present—noting in particular the students of the various educational institutions that participate, and the individuals who especially distinguish themselves by their co-operation—and also describing the state of plantings made in former years, must be sent by the secretaries of the various councils to the governors of their respective provinces. It will then be incumbent upon each governor to form a general review for his province for submission to the minister of agriculture. By thus regulating the celebration of the day, it is hoped in time to produce a marked influence upon the extension of wooded areas in all parts of the kingdom.—“American City.”

THE CIVIC CARNIVAL IN HONOLULU.

Honolulu has recently had eight days of its Mid-Pacific Carnival. The big show is built around a military and civic observance of the birthday of Washington. All of the many nationalities of the community join heartily in the celebrations.

Japanese give their lantern parade. The Hawaiians produce a historical spectacle. The Chinese, Portuguese, Koreans, Porto Ricans and Filipinos contribute. Everything is out of doors excepting the flower of Hibiscus show, which is in the large new armory of the National Guard. The comic opera “Sho-Gun” was produced one evening and a Peace Pageant at the same place in the morning. There were swimming and boat races and a water carnival. Baseball and tennis had their places, with fireworks in the nature of an artificial eruption of the “Punchbowl” crater in the city.

Illuminations were a feature. The Hawaiian Electric Company “dressed” the former palace, on all sides, with more than 3,000 incandescents. The Honolulu Gas Company gave about the same amount of light each evening in the same neighborhood. This point is the civic centre.

In attendance upon this eighth annual Carnival were about 75,000 people from the various islands of the group and about 4,000 tourists from the mainland, the Orient and Europe. On February 22 the 6,000 troops stationed in and about Honolulu were paraded.

RAILWAYS IN SWEDEN.

Sweden owns and operates 2,850 miles of steam railways. The total cost of these railways is \$163,043,844 and the capital increase during the year 1913 amounted to \$5,360,000. In operation, these railways received \$15,168,000 from freight traffic during the year and \$7,638,000 from passengers. The running expenses amounted to \$16,857,200, leaving a balance of \$5,949,600.

As the state railways of Sweden cost a total of \$168,043,846, the annual interest charge of four per cent would amount to \$6,721,753. The loss in taxes, based upon the rate which the privately owned railways of the United States pay, would amount to \$1,425,000, or a total expense to be added to the running expenses of \$8,146,753. Subtracting the balance from operation of \$5,949,000, there is a total net loss of \$2,197,153 for the year 1913.

The wages on the Swedish railways are only about one-half what is paid in this country and the freight rates are

three times as high as in Canada and the United States; yet with freight rates which average 2.23 cents per ton per mile the net loss on less than three thousand miles of railway amounted to \$2,197,153 in one year.

BELGIUM TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE.

Viscount Bryce, O.M., has consented to become president of the newly formed Belgium Town Planning Committee which has been constituted by the various committees in England previously considering the question of the replanning of Belgium. The committee, which is under the patronage of the Belgian Government, has Mr. Raymond Unwin as chairman and Mr. Ewart G. Culpin as secretary.

ENGLISH CITIES DURING WAR TIMES.

The effect of the war on English municipal activities is very marked. The employes of local authorities, however, are setting an admirable example. The men who are still at their posts are not only giving of their time and their work, but they are reserving a definite percentage of their salaries and wages for the relief of those upon whom the burdens of war press most heavily. The local authorities have encouraged the officers and men by making arrangements to insure that dependents will not suffer; the principle being adopted is “full salaries or wages less government pay, and appointment available on return.” The local authorities have not adopted a nervous attitude toward the situation, but they are inclined to take advantage of the opportunity that now presents itself to carry out useful schemes that are likely to be of permanent value to the community. These schemes provide employment for a large number of workmen, who, with their dependents, would otherwise have to be supported by the rates. In general, these proposed works are of permanent value to community. They conform to a definite public need and are of such a character that local work-people can be employed in their usual occupations. Lastly, normal wages are being generally paid for the work completed, and inefficient labor is rarely employed merely because of its cheapness.—Robt. M. Jameson in National Municipal Review.

MUNICIPAL CONTROL OVER FOOD PRICES.

In a letter to the “Journal of Commerce” from England, W. E. Dowding gives a very interesting illustration of the efficacy of Municipal control over prices of food stuffs in South Wales. He says:—

It has been shown that circumstances can triumph over abnormal circumstances. When prices first began to move in an upward direction, the major and corporation of Neath, in South Wales, called an emergency meeting at which a deputation from the Neath Grocers' Association were present by invitation. As a result, the Association promised its cordial co-operation with the Corporation and a representative committee was formed to regulate the weekly prices of certain provisions.

Each Monday morning certain wholesale firms of millers, provision and other merchants lay before the Town Clerk the lowest cash prices they are prepared to accept for butter, cheese, bacon, lard, flour, sugar, and margarine. These quotations are placed before the Committee and used as a basis for fixing retail prices for the coming week.

The result has been that Neath prices, compared with London prices, are lower by some six to nine per cent., notwithstanding the fact that carriage—roughly \$8 per ton—has to be paid in the former case.

A comparison of retail bacon prices shows an excess of 4 cents per lb. in London prices over Neath prices, while sugar remains the same for both places.

There is no question, however, of juggling with prices, as the weekly quotations are retained by the Town Clerk, and are always open for public inspection.

This scheme has broader issues, and at no distant date it may be used by the Government as a basis for the regulation of prices in each borough, and it may be used to cover commodities of every description.

Prices under municipal control are bound to give more satisfaction than any maximum price fixed by a Parliamentary Committee sitting in London, legislating for the whole country without consideration of local conditions.

The scheme has the merit of protecting the honest trader, while it throttles the greedy money-grabber who seeks to destroy all the reciprocal obligations which exist between all who live.