

THE FORUM.—(Continued.)**PROGRESSIVE NEW JERSEY.**

Chapter 53, Laws 1918, authorizes municipalities to buy and sell food and fuel for the period of the war and six months thereafter.

The Secretary of the State Department of Agriculture has issued a statement urging the municipalities to take advantage of it. He said in part: "The bill was made an administrative measure because the road between producers and consumers of food should be made as short and inexpensive as possible. The provision requiring daily publicity respecting purchases and prices paid at points of production or supply will be a great help in securing success. While the municipality would supply distributors at cost it would also sell at retail to all those who were willing to pay cash and carry their purchases home."

A TRAVELLER IN WAR TIME.

With an Essay on The American Contribution and the Democratic Idea, by Winston Churchill, author of "The Inside of the Cup," etc., is published by The Macmillan Company, of Toronto and New York. The book, which is illustrated, sells for \$1.25 net.

Mr. Churchill, who has recently returned from abroad, tells the story of France and England in war time.

Numerous privileges were extended to the distinguished American novelist on his trip, so he has much to say that is very interesting as to conditions in the warring countries.

He writes of well known battlefields which he visited, of distinguished people with whom he conversed and of the spirit and temper of the times. The essay of nearly one hundred pages will be to many not the least interesting part of this volume.

The author thinks Britain has learned more from this war than any other nation, and will probably gain more by that knowledge. "But the necessity for national organization socializes the nation capable of it; or, to put the matter more truly, if the socializing process had anticipated the war—as it had in Great Britain—the ability to complete it under stress is the test of a democratic nation; and hence the test of democracy, since the socializing process becomes international. Britain has stood the test, even from the old-fashioned militaristic point of view, since it is apparent that no democracy can wage a sustained great war unless it is socialized." Mr. Churchill is evidently a close student of economics, as a few quotations from his brilliant essay will show.

"In America we succeeded in eliminating hereditary power, in obtaining a large measure of political liberty, only to see the rise of an economic power, and the consequent loss of economic liberty. An individualistic economic philosophy worked admirably while there was ample land for the pioneer; equality of opportunity to satisfy the individual initiative of the enterprising. But what is known as industrialism brought in its train fear and favor, privilege and poverty; slums, disease, and municipal vice, fostered a too rapid immigration, established in America a tenant system alien to our tradition. Today, less than two-thirds of our farmers own their land, while vast numbers of our working men and women possess nothing but the labor of their hands. . . . And it is coming to be recognized that material prosperity, up to a certain point, is the foundation of mental and spiritual welfare: clean and comfortable surroundings, beauty, rational amusements, opportunity for a rational satisfaction of the human instincts are essential to contentment and progress."

Speaking of the plan of national finance outlined in the program of the British Labor Party, he says:—

The older school denounces the program as Utopian. On the other hand, economists of the modern school who have been consulted have declared it practical. It is certain that before the war began it would not have been thought possible to raise the billions which in four years have been expended on sheer destruction; and one of our saddest reflections today must be of regret that a small portion of these billions which have gone to waste could not have been expended for the very purposes outlined—education, public health, the advancement of science and art, public buildings, roads and parks, and the proper housing of populations!" He pleads for more and more education

and thinks the British Labor Party rightly lays stress on education, on "freedom of mental opportunity," and says the vast sums it proposes to spend for this purpose are justified.

He says: "For freedom without education is a myth. By degrees men and women are making ready to take their places in an emulative rather than a materialistically competitive order. But the experimental aspect of this system should always be borne in mind, with the fact that its introduction and progress, like that of other elements in the democratic program, must be gradual, though always proceeding along sound lines. For we have arrived at that stage of enlightenment when we realize that the only mundane perfection lies in progress rather than achievement. The millennium is always a lap ahead. There would be no satisfaction in overtaking it, for then we should have nothing more to do, nothing more to work for."

It is quite evident the author is that rare combination—a novelist and publicist. We hope President Wilson will find a place for him in his Cabinet. Such minds are needed in public life.

NOVEL SYSTEM FOR GARBAGE.

Miami, Fla., has added municipal ownership and care of garbage cans to the gathering and disposal by incineration of the material. Electric trucks are used to collect the garbage. The city provides, at no direct cost to the householder, metal cans of standard size. These have been purchased at wholesale by the city at a cost of \$2.00 per can. The population is 28,000 and the service provides for the collection of one full can a week from each family. When the garbage is received at the incineration plant the cans after being emptied are cleaned by hot water and a brush and then thoroughly sterilized by steam. The cleansed cans are returned and full ones gathered on the same trip.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE RAILWAYS.

The experience of the English Government in railway control is of prime interest at this juncture. The following summary of the railway control by the English Government is taken from a speech delivered in the Senate, January 4, by Senator Henry F. Hollis, of New Hampshire:

"The English Government took entire control of all railways in Great Britain on August 14, 1914, agreeing to pay the stockholders the same earnings as they received in the year 1913.

"As traffic demands increased while facilities decreased, due to wear and tear, and the enlistment of thousands of railway workers, recourse was had to reduction of service and the employment of women and men not capable of bearing arms, the number of women employed increasing in three years from 15,000 to 100,000. Freight cars were pooled without regard to ownership, and the loading and unloading of cars were expedited under heavy penalties, fines and imprisonment; it was made a criminal offense to fail to load or unload in accordance with the rules. Passenger trains were annulled, reservation of seats abolished, traffic diverted, and passenger rates advanced 50 per cent., not so much to increase revenue, as to discourage travel.

"The Government control in England was exercised through a railway executive committee of ten appointed by the Government from the general managers of certain important roads, this board having as its official chairman a member of the Cabinet, the president of the Board of Trade. The staff of each railway remained undisturbed.

"Wages, hours of work, and other labour questions have been settled by conciliation and arbitration; and it is stated that both the management and the workers have worked in harmony, realizing that whatever concessions or sacrifices were made accrued to the benefit of the nation, and not to private interests."

A MULTITUDE OF MEN.

There is something greater in this age than its greatest men; it is the appearance of a multitude or men on the stage where as yet the few have acted their parts alone. This influence is to endure to the end of time. What more of the present is to survive? Perhaps much of which we now take no note. The glory of an age is often hidden from itself. Perhaps some word has been spoken in our day which we have not deigned to hear, but which is to grow clearer and louder through all ages. Perhaps some silent thinker among us is at work in his closet whose name is to fill the earth.—William E. Channing.