

# OUR PUBLIC FORUM

## VIII.—C. E. Schaff

### On Railway Investments



a careful study of the railroad investments, said in part:

President Wilson, recently referring to our railroad problems, said in part: "They are indispensable to our whole economic life and railway securities are at the very heart of most investments, large and small, public and private, by individuals and by institutions. . . . There is no other interest so central to the business welfare of the country, as this. No doubt, in the light of the new day, with its new understandings, the problem of the railroads will also be met and dealt with in a spirit of candor and justice."

When the first citizen of the land stresses the importance of understanding and dealing justly with the railroads, certainly the American plowman can venture upon the problem. C. E. Schaff, president of the M. K. & T. railway company, when asked to outline the relation of the public to railroads investments, said in part:

"It may be said that the railroad world is encumbered with a lot of phantoms which exist only in the popular fancy. For instance, because there have been a few so-called 'railroad magnates' whose names have figured prominently in finance, many people have come to believe that the railroads of the country are largely owned by a few rich men. As a matter of fact billions of dollars of American railroad securities, less than five per cent is now, or ever has been, in the hands of these men who have figured prominently in the newspaper headlines—while the other 95 per cent is in the hands of over two million investors, large and small, who in many instances have put the modest savings of a lifetime into these securities in order that they might lay away a competency for old age. When, therefore, the value of these securities is depressed or perchance destroyed, the hardship is a hundred-fold greater upon thousands of every-day citizens, than upon the handful of millionaires, good or bad, who have figured prominently in railroad circles.

Hundreds of millions of dollars of the assets of our great life and fire insurance companies, savings banks, trust companies, educational and fiduciary institutions are invested in railroad bonds—and the moment, therefore, that the soundness of these bonds is called into question the financial solidity of these myriad institutions—directly affecting the welfare of millions of policyholders and bank depositors—is gravely menaced. During the last several years, many millions of dollars representing depreciated values, have been charged off the books of concerns like those enumerated above. American railroads have become a vital part of the very woof and fabric of the nation. Their continued efficiency is absolutely essential to the smallest community in the land.

In blindly striking at the railroads our blows fall not merely upon thousands who have committed no wrong, but, in the last analysis, upon ourselves. We should remember how interdependent we have come to be in this mighty republic of ours—that each is in truth become more and more his brother's keeper, and that we need to act and think circumspectly, lest in our mistaken zeal we destroy those who, like ourselves, need whatever of this world's goods the toil and sweat of years has bequeathed to them."

### Records of Longevity.

Hardly a month passes without notice in the newspaper dispatches of the death of an old man or woman in some part of the United States who claimed to have reached or even to have passed considerably beyond the century mark. Remembering the three-score-years and ten spans of years of human existence, we are apt to read skeptically especially when a particularly extravagant claimant had a black skin and lived in the south where no record of the birth of slaves was kept in perhaps the majority of instances. Yet one of our old negroes modestly claiming to have survived only 110 or 115 summers (with their countless water melons) is still a comparative youth beside some of the alleged centenarians of England, France and other parts of the world.

George Borrow in his "Bible in Spain" speaks of a remarkable old woman of a Spanish province who appeared to be not more than fifty but who was said to be 130 years of age, and Parkham, in his account of the struggle between the Spaniards and French for the possession of Florida in the sixteenth century, mentions an aged Indian who was believed by his tribesmen to be no less than 250 years old.

Considerably more worthy of respectful consideration are the old folk whose names and supposedly attested years are found in the French record called the Galerie des Centenaires Ancien et Modernes. Among these are found the names of Thomas Parr and Henry Jenkins, Englishmen, who are credited respectively with the ages of 152 and 169 years, and who might have added a few more had both of them not died by accident. It is needless to add that the records for these two centenarians are not accepted by all investigators. According to the authority mentioned, Jeanne Serimphau died at 128, after having lived in single blessedness until she was 127 and then married. Another French lady, Marie Priou, reached the great age of 158. It appears further that Surgeon Politman, of Lorraine, and that Patric O'Neil, called the Irish Bluebeard, died at 120 after burying no less than seven wives. An extraordinary record among those in the Galerie is that of a Norwegian peasant who died at 160, leaving behind him two sons, one aged 108 and the other only 9.

Another astonishing case is that of Robert Taylor who is said to have died at 134 in 1898, when he was killed with joy on receiving a photograph of Queen Victoria, autographed and sent to him by herself. There is also mention of an Irishman named Brown who lived to be 120 years old in spite of almost continual drunkenness. Aother hoary old

drunkard was Espagnac, Frenchman, who died at the age of 112. It was said of him that he was under the influence of liquor for ninety years. A Frenchman of 128 years is mentioned who attributed his great age to taking an occasional dose of gunpowder, and a woman of 124 attributed her long life to great quantities of coffee. A man of 114 receives mention who lived on fruit, chiefly melons, and continually chewed lemon peel.

The average man is not as tough as some of these ancients and their habits would be a very unsafe guide for him who would live a century. Many factors contribute to long life, but perhaps none is of greater importance than temperate indulgence and cheerfulness of mind.—Anderson Mail.

### The Philosophy of Flowers.

It is getting spring time and folk naturally turn to thoughts of grass and flowers and things that make the earth beautiful. Without the flowers there could be no fruition, and without the grass the world would be depopulated by famine. What a wonderful thing then are grass and flowers, for they bring us life itself. In a pretty border of flower scenes The Progressive Farmer has the following pretty, but practical little story about flowers and the part they play in our world:

"The grounds about the home are a part of it—the setting that takes away from the pile of lumber and stone its look of barren cheerlessness. A country home without flowers and lawns is a house only, and never has that air of charm that stately trees, green grass and flowers lend even to the humblest cottage. We do not feel that it is unfitting here to say a word about the part beautiful surroundings play in making the place where we live something more than a home in name only.

"Flowers and trees and grass are Nature's means of picturing her beauties to us—delights that are as much an essential part of a well rounded life as are the more material fruits of orchard and field. The time should be when no Southern farm home should be without a spacious well-sodded lawn, with a few well planted trees and borders of shrubs and flowers. A few loads of good manure and a half-day's work in sodding the lawn will pay any farmer good dividends—larger returns in the end, perhaps, than an equal expenditure anywhere else on the farm.

"At first these returns won't be visible, and maybe never in dollars and cents; but as the years go by the sweet satisfaction that comes from pretty grounds grows apace, and finer influences exist for keeping warm the love of the land in the hearts of our country boys and girls.

### Music in the Schools.

It is altogether likely that the instructors in instrumental music in the public schools will find instances of talent that may be developed into art. This is one good reason why the pupils should avail themselves of the opportunity afforded them. But, apart from that and the individual advancement that may result, the mere study will be its own reward. While, perhaps, the young people in the schools do not realize it yet, there is a vast deal to be learned besides the practically useful and the ornamental. Appreciation of beauty, of fine things, of art, of literature and of music forms a large and happy part of the well-rounded man or woman.

Appreciation of these, and especially of the beauty of music, is a thing that may be innate in many, but it must be fostered and encouraged, even schooled, in all. The man who, bromidically speaking, "knows what he likes" may like the right thing, but he cannot like it as much as he would if he understood it. In other words, if he lacks appreciation, he will certainly fail of the full enjoyment that he should derive from it.

Singing has been taught, and well taught, in the schools of Richmond for a considerable period and to that extent the pupils have been taught music. But—let him dispute it who will—singers are, as a class, less of musicians than any of those who make music. Perhaps the possession of an unusually fine voice tends to make its owner less regardful of the value of study, except of the voice—placing, breathing, tone production and the other items of the singer's equipment; perhaps the singer, knowing that his voice will "carry" him, feels justified in leaving all the rest of music to his conductor, his coach or his accompanist. Whatever the reason, the singer is too rarely a musician.

Fortunately, in the effort to acquire technic the student of any instrument must absorb to a greater or less degree, a certain understanding of music itself. So, coming back to the point of beginning, the study of instrumental music by the pupils in the public schools must of necessity inspire them with a wider understanding and appreciation of the beauties that lie in printed scores, waiting to "open a new heaven for those who hear," and must to that degree broaden them and fit them for a fuller life.—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

### The County to County Contest.

Now that we are fact to face with another campaign year, the time is ripe for the people who are not interested in political excitement to get together and demand a cessation of the political methods of past years in this state. The people should elect men to office on issues, and not on partisan feeling and political excitement and hatred.

The position will be taken that it would hurt this or any other candidate to do away with the present plan. We do not think it would, but we have nothing to do with candidates. Everyone has preferences in political campaigns, but these preferences should not determine the kind of campaign which is to be waged. It may hurt Manning, or Cooper or Bleas to have the state-wide joint contests, or it may hurt each one of them. We do not see that it will, but we are not legislating in the party councils for any man, but for the party, and for means of carrying on a campaign for the enlightenment of the people on the issues which will confront them.

We believe that every man in the race should visit, if not all counties, then all sections of the state, where the people may have the opportunity to see and hear him, but when he has gone to that trouble he should be allowed to make known his views on the stump touching the needs of the state, and not be forced in twenty minutes to answer some charges made against him in the heat of debate, and with no present opportunity to answer the same from the records.

And a campaign conducted by every man on his own responsibility will relieve the people of a lot of candidates traveling around the state attacking other people's records, creating furor and excitement from which no good can come.

The needs of the people and

of the state is what should control those in charge of the conventions, county and state, and we trust that some arrangement will be made by which the people of the state may hear each and every candidate on his merits, and that each and everyone will have an opportunity to make known to the people the things which he stands for, and the principles which he advocates, and that the people after hearing them all may make a decision on merit and nothing else.—Abbeville Press and Banner.

### The Newspaper and Public Records.

Now and then there arise instances wherein newspapers and well meaning public officials have misunderstandings as to the right of newspapers to have access to public records. This is true, of course, to the failure of public officials to realize the right of newspapers and their obligations as newspapers to the public. The newspaper contracts with its subscribers to print the news, and to print it as accurately and as reliable as possible, and when this is not done the newspaper suffers in the estimation of its readers and patrons. Newspapers that endeavor to take their obligations seriously and are sufficiently well acquainted with their own rights and functions, as such, are sure to be respected and regarded as reliable, while the paper that is uncertain as to its functions and indifferent as to its obligations, as a newspaper, though it may be perfectly honest, runs the risk of being regarded as dishonest or "controlled."

The worst thing that can be said of a newspaper is that it will "suppress news." For a newspaper that is deception, and the paper that once enters upon that course weaves a tangible web, indeed, that will choke it with all decent people.

This is an illustration of why newspapers at times have to insist upon their rights to have access to public records. Suppose in an important case—not scandal, for without going to the records, there is always enough scandal known—and more than decent newspapers care to print—the officer in charge of an office where records are filed, out of consideration for friends, or for some other equally worthy impulse—declines to allow reporters an opportunity to get the information desired and the reporter accepts his decision as final. The result is an impression on the disinterested reading public that the case is being "hushed up," and that even the newspapers are party to a conspiracy of suppression. Right then the newspaper's character is gone. And though—as is the case in a great majority of instances—there is no "conspiracy to suppress clean light of publicity. Publicity thrown on the whole transaction and harm is done.

As a purifier and builder of mutual respect and understanding, there is nothing like the clean light of publicity. Publicity is reflected facts, and if the reflector, the newspaper, is colored, dirty or distorted, your clean publicity is impossible. All an honest newspaper does is to print the facts as nearly accurately as it is possible. And to do so they must go to the records.—Spartanburg Herald.

### HERE'S A SPELLING TEST 21 Common Words Which Are Often Written Incorrectly.

Here are twenty-one common words frequently misspelled. Get someone to dictate the following paragraph to you and see how many of them you can spell correctly, says the American Boy:

"The privilege of separating ninety miscellaneous calendars, arranged in two parallel-lines, was against the principles of the superintendent, so his niece, not to disappoint the government or cause it to lose business, removed the principal calendars and thus relieved her uncle of a strain which might have brought on disease. Then she believed it had become truly necessary for her to receive her instructions in grammar."

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## ODD MONEY IN USE

### Quaint Forms Replace Gold Hoarded for War Needs.

Romanoff Jubilee Postage Stamps Now Currency in Russia—Germany Uses Iron Coins—Stone Medium in Caroline Islands

London.—Some quaint forms of money have come into existence during the war, owing to the shortage of gold. England introduced the one pound and ten shilling treasury notes, but other countries have been far more original in their makeshift arrangements at the mints.

In their annual bullion report Messrs. Samuel Montagu & Co. tell how Russia, in order to overcome the difficulty of providing small change, has printed the designs of the ten, fifteen and twenty kopek denominations of the Romanoff jubilee postage stamp issue upon thick paper and, by lettering on the reverse side, has authorized them to be used as currency with the same legal tender as silver subsidiary money.

Iron money was put into circulation by Germany on October 1. The federal council decided that the issue should be withdrawn two years after the cessation of hostilities. A hundred million of five pennig pieces was the authorized extent of the issue.

The Caroline Islands, which passed from Spanish to German sovereignty after the Spanish-American war by the terms of the 1898 peace treaty, have since the occupation of the islands by the United States, issued a "fai" used as the medium of exchange. It consists of a solid thick cone which, when a hole is drilled through it, can be inserted so as to insert the cone into "currency."

The value represented by the stone varies with its size, and the lime-juice of which the "fai" is composed may be of fine white grain to be considered good delivery. Yet there seems to be no real necessity for durability at all, for it is quite customary to mark the money, as it were, and give it in its old position outside the owner's hut—an excellent provision considering the bulkiness of the material.

The disappearance of small metal currency in Mexico owing to the amount of paper money put into circulation during the military struggle or the presidency of the republic, caused various expedients to be adopted. Tramcar tickets have been used for small change and cardboard

money, about one inch by two inches in size, good for five to ten and twenty centavos, was issued by different

With regard to the output of gold in 1915, the report says that in view of the improved output from the Transvaal and other African districts the world's production is likely to be about £98,000,000 (\$490,000,000). About two-thirds of the world's gold supplies are derived annually from the British empire, and, roughly, £60,000,000 (\$300,000,000) thus is added automatically to the gold resources of the empire.

### THEIR DUTIES TO "SOCIETY"

Women Would Find It Hard to Answer Why They Assume Responsibilities of Position.

Everyone knows what "society" is, although to anyone who did not it would be difficult to explain. Men laugh at it, but it is not to be laughed at. With a power as strong as the church, or stronger, it lies about us, impalpable, whimsical, almost irresistible. It may take all a woman has to give, and give little back; or it may give everything it has to give, and demand little. Whether it is woman's highest duty, or her toy, has apparently not been decided. Whether those who give themselves to it most entirely do so in an abandonment of self-indulgence or in a spirit of high sacrifice one cannot say. The inveterate habit, common to all people, of dressing up whatever they are doing in a cloak of morality, has in this case so confused all the phraseology of social rites that it is impossible to tell what is pleasure and what is crucifixion. Women dress not because they like to look pretty, but because they "owe it" to their husbands, or their children, or to society. They make calls and give dinners, not because they like it, but because they feel themselves obliged to, and they are glad when it is over. They go to parties, not because they expect to have a good time—they profess to be bored by them—but because for various reasons it seems necessary.—Atlantic Monthly.

### Spray Keeps Off Enemies.

Many of the tropical species of a sluglike mollusk (onchidium), found on the rocks between tide marks, have the back studded with eyes, and are at the same time provided with a very efficient spraying apparatus which is used with effect to repel the attacks of that very remarkable creature, the waiking fish (periophthalmus).

With bulging eyes, this creature, for several hours daily, leaves its native element and hunts along the strand for insects and "onchidiums." If the latter see him coming they ward off his attack by means of the acid spray.

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