

MUNICIPAL MUSEUM SHOWS GRAPHICALLY CITY'S ACTIVITIES

Outgrowth of the Budget Exhibit Housed in Old City College and Expanded to Reveal New York at a Glance

By HARRY ESTY DOUNCE. NEW YORK is to have—may has a Municipal Museum, which museum is about to take up its permanent quarters in the old City College building at Lexington Avenue and Twenty-third Street.

And what is a Municipal Museum? Various frivolous fancies jump into mind at the phrase. Eject them, picture an Eden. Museum of pompous was worked, representing Peter Stuyvesant, Peter F. Knickerbocker, Nathan Hale, Samuel J. Tilden, George Francis Hall, William Marcy Tweed, Honest J. Kelly and the other fifty varieties of human fauna recorded of Manhattan Island.

Do not think to find a glass case covered stuffed specimens of a quaint, high browed, begoggled creature, cat-fogged something like this: CIVIC EXPERT. (E. horrendus, formerly E. nobilis.) First observed in the city about 1909, the expert rapidly multiplied among other mathematical activities until in 1916 it was common throughout the municipal departments.

You may remember the first of the Budget exhibits. It was held in the old Tefft-Weller Building on Broadway, not far above City Hall Park, in 1911, Mayor Gaynor's time. Its purpose was to account to the man in the street for the cost of the millions of dollars the city proposed to spend.

A Permanent Budget Exhibit. They fixed up that exhibit because that budget looked so big and they thought the man in the street would clear light upon its bigness. Nowadays we contemplate budgets a good share of \$100,000,000 bigger.

FOUR days after Senator Reed threw the vitriol of his displeasure upon the "infamous dictatorship" it was proposed to establish President Wilson signed the food act, which the Senate had passed over Reed's unflinching and valiant opposition, and Herbert Hoover, the despot, took official control of the nation's food problem.

Hoover therefore has been in full authority for four months, but he had in fact exercised a considerable degree of influence in advance of his official appointment—an example of "unparalleled temerity" in the opinion of Mr. Reed. In order to put into effect some semblance of food control while Congress was haggling over the terms and provisions of the food bill the President announced on May 17 that when the bill was passed authorizing a food administration he would name Hoover as its head.

From that time Hoover began his conferences with representatives of the food industries and trades, offering from time to time suggestions which in the majority of instances were followed. In view of this Hoover's reign may be said to have begun nearly seven months ago.

What has Hoover accomplished in these seven months? Are prices going up or down? Are there signs that his administration is to be a fiasco, as Senator Reed and a few others in the Senate and House predicted? Is he likely to suffer official extinction, which has been the fate of most food directors? Has business been alarmed, articles discouraged and production lessened, as forecast, by the threats of Hoover's despotism?

These are interesting questions in the light of the opposition the so-called dictatorship aroused in Congress and in view of the fact that President Wilson indicated in his address to Congress last Tuesday that he wished still broader control over prices for the war agencies he has established. They are answered by a brief survey of the Food Administration's accomplishments in the last seven months.



DR. F. B. ROBINSON, A BACKER OF THE MUNICIPAL MUSEUM IDEA

Attention to educate him in municipal affairs. Few of the widest awake of an ever realize how little we know about our city's business. Having learned school days by diligent application to the civics and history textbooks that the scheme of all American government depends upon a balance among three branches, executive, legislative and judicial, we take that arrangement for granted, and if, for some reason, probably name the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen and the courts.

Now of course the reader of this column smiles, for he is a person of discernment and penetration and understands both the intricate system of government that has come to us in the Aldermen and the enormous power that has been added, little by little, to the Board of Estimate, and so on. When anybody mentions a "wild man's dream" called commission government, Gentle Reader, you don't shudder, nor do you smile, because you could put your tape measure on the distance between that dream and the government actually existing in this imperial city—as Mr. Prendergast calls it when he makes an after dinner speech.

But if you find a little research among your friends and neighbors you will surely find a lot of them less informed. And so the Municipal Museum will be primarily for them, perhaps, rather than for you; but you will find it richly worth a visit. For instance, when you come away you may wonder, as the writer did, "If that list of the City Chamberlain's duties shows all he has to do why do they pay him \$15,000?"

Already the museum has a fine array of material. Some of it comes from that same first budget exhibit, and has been corrected to date. Exhibits have been collected from various city departments and public service corporations.

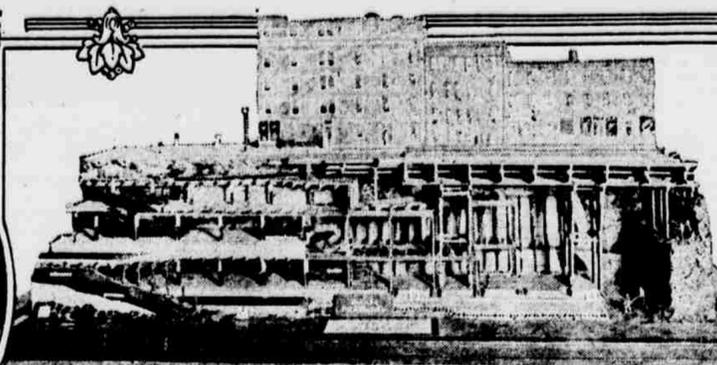
The Board of Water Supply contributes the beautiful aqueduct model and photographs. The Interborough adds models showing how signal systems work. The Plant and Structure Department, which rules the East River bridges, illustrates them in several ways, among others by sectional specimens of the suspension cables.

The Police Department had a sort of little museum of its own, showing safety first arrangements, traffic regulation and the like. It turned them over. The Fire Department had a miniature modern fire tug, eight feet long or thereabouts, before which a healthy schoolboy might spend a blissful hour. It had a spectacular wall exhibit, showing the tall building that stands in Lombard square fire in its upper stories, with light, smoke and all, and how high up its walls the pressure streams would reach. It had many other striking things, including a set of photographs of that ice bound delirium which the Equitable fire was.

The fire prevention authorities had a model object lesson on the benefit of fireproofing. It is a row of flaming buildings all across a map from New York to Chicago. If I remember rightly it may be to Des Moines. The buildings represent a year's preventable fire loss.

For some little time it has been going, as a sort of trial heat, in the main building of the new City College group up town. The trial was a brilliant success. Although it was made quickly and in a location out of the way for the purpose, the attendance totaled more than 100,000.

The name program was City Government Exposition. The Japanese commissioners were officially welcomed there and were greatly interested by the show. The Museum of French Art of the French Institute wrote for a copy of the catalogue which they wanted for the Paris Government Institute of Arts.



AN EXHIBIT SHOWING THE FOUR LEVELS OF THE NEW SUBWAY



GENERAL VIEW OF MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

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FRANCIS J. OPPENHEIMER, DIRECTOR, MUNICIPAL MUSEUM.

frud from some public spirited citizen providing a staff of investigators like the reporters of a newspaper.

During the exposition up town the models and charts and tables were supplemented with municipal moving pictures, shown three times a week. The plan for the permanent museum includes a calendar of special days, a health day, a police day, a fire day, a subway day, and so forth, on which days the appropriate officials will talk informally to students and taxpayers on the work of their departments.

The old college building at Lexington Avenue and Twenty-third Street is particularly well located for the purpose, when you come to think of it. Conveniently near at hand are most of the great up and down town arteries of transportation, present and prospective. The Twenty-third Street cross town cars pass the door.

Few people realize the history of that dark Gothic pile, for it has been almost entirely removed to new quarters. Originally it was the City Academy, opened in 1847. In those days the exterior of the building was covered with light stucco, and it stood alone in a pleasant prospect of green fields and forest trees.

City's Government Pictured. One of the museum problems for the architect was provision for the great relief map of New York and its surroundings, which was the show piece of the Panama Pacific exhibit. The map is not far from thirty feet long. It is kept corrected to date, for every building appears on it in scale. It will be let down into a sort of well in the basement floor, so

against the industry. With a measure of confidence restored, the threatened slaughter of cattle and calves did not take place.

There is a multitude of incidental activities in which the Food Administration is constantly engaged, some of them of great importance. Mr. Hoover has gathered around him a vast and wide experience about him to head the various departments of his work.

Yes, the Food Administration exercises powers nearly as broad as those so greatly feared and denigrated by Hoovers. Reed and Hardwick have set up a regulation over prices that might have caused a revolution if any American Government had attempted to do the same thing in the public times of peace. It is impossible to do the same thing in the public times of peace. It is impossible to do the same thing in the public times of peace. It is impossible to do the same thing in the public times of peace.

MILLIONS SAVED PUBLIC IN SEVEN MONTHS OF THE HOOVER REGIME

By JOHN M. MINAR. "I declare it to be my opinion that in proportion to the amount of like Hoover interfering with the trade of the country you will have high prices. I make the prediction now, claiming no authority as a prophet, that if you undertake this when you are upon you will find food at high prices months from now as it is to-day; that you will find prices are higher twelve months from now than they are to-day, unless, indeed, the war shall have ceased and men shall have gone back to their usual occupations."—James A. Reed of Missouri in the Senate of the United States August 6, 1917.

rate a golden era of low prices to the consumer, that he promised to bring down the high cost of living to a pre-war basis. If it is understood that it has been the aim of the Food Administration only to adjust food prices to the cost of production, allowing a reasonable profit all along the line but prohibiting any sort of profiteering, it will be easier to judge the high prices on the record of Mr. Hoover and his associates. The effort has been to stabilize prices rather than to effect a dramatic reduction.

Has Hoover Made Good? It probably is safe to say that President Wilson's selection of a Food Administrator, particularly since not all of his selections have turned out as happily. It also is general opinion in Washington that Hoover has made good already.

The most spectacular act of the Food Administration probably has saved the American people the most money. This was the stopping of dealings in wheat futures and the subsequent licensing of grain elevators and all dealers in grain. A third step will be taken on or before the baking industry is placed under license.

has been in the neighborhood of \$68,500,000 a month. The benefits of low flour prices were not at once communicated to the general public. A great amount of complaint and criticism arose in all parts of the country because bread remained at the old price or in some cases was sold for even more in defiance of the fact that the cost of production was lower. It was not understood that the Food Administration had not yet licensed the bakers and was not in a position to regulate the industry.

When the licensing system controlling the bakers goes into effect tomorrow the 7 and 8 cent loaf of bread of 16 ounces will appear in practically every city of the United States. A reduction to this price is not expected universally. No hard and fast regulation has been made by the Food Administration compelling this or any other price, except as unreasonable profits are prohibited. But it is believed that there are few places where the conditions will not permit the manufacture of a one pound loaf for 7 or 8 cents.

Aside from the reduction in price effected by the simplified formula and the elimination of a considerable part of the deliveries, an important annual saving has been made estimated at \$60,000,000 of flour, 100,000,000 pounds of sugar and 100,000,000

of flour and the sugar and lard will be conserved by the reduction forced in their use. Sugar to one-half the former average and lard to one-third. The saving of flour will be accomplished by the abolition of the privilege of returning stale bread.

The sugar shortage has caused considerable inconvenience and hardship, particularly in New York and the East. Even now it is being represented that the situation is not being handled properly by the Food Administration and its agents. Whether or not this is true, the case of sugar affords one of the most interesting records of food control.

Food Administration, Just Getting Fairly Started, Already Has Remarkable Record—Licensing System Bringing Fair Prices and Ending Profiteering

in this war as they did in the civil war most commodities would be beyond the reach of any but the wealthy. Applying the civil war rate of increase to the present price of the entrance of America into the European conflict, it would not be long before corn would be \$4.91 a bushel, wheat \$4.82 a bushel, flour \$18.87 a barrel, hams 75 cents a pound, whole and other food commodities in like proportion. However, the price of flour jumped from \$2.37 for 100 pounds in 1861 up to \$9.50 in 1865. Pork went from \$1.88 to \$15.60, salt pork from \$1.43 a barrel to \$45.50, butter from 15.4 cents to 45 cents a pound and sugar from 8.7 cents to 30 cents.

As a comparison with these inflated prices the following table is printed of the prices for certain food commodities on May 15 of this year, shortly after the war began, and of the average prices for the same commodities in the week ended November 24. It will be noted that in many instances prices have dropped. Where there have been increases they have not been great. The claim that prices have been stabilized is in considerable measure borne out by the table.

Wheat flour, 16 barrel, No. 2, 1917, 1916, 1915, 1914, 1913, 1912, 1911, 1910, 1909, 1908, 1907, 1906, 1905, 1904, 1903, 1902, 1901, 1900, 1899, 1898, 1897, 1896, 1895, 1894, 1893, 1892, 1891, 1890, 1889, 1888, 1887, 1886, 1885, 1884, 1883, 1882, 1881, 1880, 1879, 1878, 1877, 1876, 1875, 1874, 1873, 1872, 1871, 1870, 1869, 1868, 1867, 1866, 1865, 1864, 1863, 1862, 1861, 1860, 1859, 1858, 1857, 1856, 1855, 1854, 1853, 1852, 1851, 1850, 1849, 1848, 1847, 1846, 1845, 1844, 1843, 1842, 1841, 1840, 1839, 1838, 1837, 1836, 1835, 1834, 1833, 1832, 1831, 1830, 1829, 1828, 1827, 1826, 1825, 1824, 1823, 1822, 1821, 1820, 1819, 1818, 1817, 1816, 1815, 1814, 1813, 1812, 1811, 1810, 1809, 1808, 1807, 1806, 1805, 1804, 1803, 1802, 1801, 1800, 1799, 1798, 1797, 1796, 1795, 1794, 1793, 1792, 1791, 1790, 1789, 1788, 1787, 1786, 1785, 1784, 1783, 1782, 1781, 1780, 1779, 1778, 1777, 1776, 1775, 1774, 1773, 1772, 1771, 1770, 1769, 1768, 1767, 1766, 1765, 1764, 1763, 1762, 1761, 1760, 1759, 1758, 1757, 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