

flow which would have reduced its fury one-half when a freshet came.

We believe that in places the river should be straightened which would greatly increase the momentum of its flow.

The improvements as a rule should be made on the big rivers, and before the money is voted, full plans of the work to be done and the estimates of the cost, should be prepared. If this is not done the money voted will be little more than a campaign fund for the party in power.

The Merchant Marine

WHEN Secretary McAdoo was here last week, he, rather gingerly, discussed the question of the need of a merchant marine for the United States. He admitted that such an adjunct was necessary for the government, but declared that no subsidy could be considered and gave as one reason that subsidies were forbidden in the Democratic platforms. When we reflect that the platform promised a wholesome revision of the tariff, but nothing that would interfere with any legitimate business, and also that the coast shipping must be free to pass the Panama canal, and that the utmost economy must be observed in the management of government business, and then reflect how those pledges have been carried out, it is almost to laugh, to hear a member of the president's domestic and political family, with solemn accent, express his reverence for the pledges of that platform. But no matter. The secretary was evidently speaking for the president when he outlined a plan for the restoration of our merchant marine, for it is the same one proposed by the president when the European war came on, and the abject position of the great republic on the sea was made acutely apparent.

The plan in brief is to establish government lines of ships to carry the ocean commerce of the country, and for the government in lieu of paying subsidies, to go down into the treasury for the gold to meet whatever deficits might follow. This plan was discussed and rejected by congress fifteen months ago, when the war came on, and we had no way to send out what we had to sell or bring in what we desired to buy. But in some things the president is not unlike the Bourbons

who never forget and never learn anything, and we doubtless will read a recommendation to adopt that plan, when congress convenes in December.

Secretary McAdoo laid great stress on the fact that such ships would be looked upon as auxiliary ships to the regular navy, as though all ocean-going steamers have not been such auxiliary ships, since the Collins line was established on the Atlantic more than three score years ago and was a glory to the country until it was killed by a Democratic administration that took from it a petty subsidy, just when Great Britain raised the subsidy it had been paying the Cunards.

And the trouble with Mr. Wilson and Mr. McAdoo is that they long ago "ate of the insane root" that the southern chiefs made their diet when they determined to establish a government of their own, to have their slaves do the work on land and foreign ships do the work on the sea, and on the tariff and on shipping their political descendants, feasting on that same insane root cannot see that it has "taken their reason prisoner."

The experience of the most gifted and economical of nations counts for naught with them. They would not change the old rule any more than would a croaking old raven change the fashion of her nest.

The center of the financial world remains in London today because we have utterly neglected to do anything to cause the business of foreign countries to lean upon us. We have kept the opportunities abroad from our own people because we have kept up no connecting link with them. It is notorious that government agents cannot handle great enterprises as cheaply as can directly interested citizens; it is clear that to build and sail some necessary fleets would make places for hundreds of thousands of our people on sea and land, enlarge our foreign markets and open new fields for the enterprising young men of our country and begin to divert the hosts from abroad from our country to where there are cheap lands, and cause the machinery of our own industries to work without a jar.

In lieu of this, Mr. Wilson and Mr. McAdoo would further centralize our government by purchasing second rate foreign ships, run them at

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