

CURRENT TOPICS

MAYOR DUNNE, of Chicago, delivered an address on municipal ownership in Boston July 29. Several thousand people were in attendance, and it is said that the mayor won many converts. Reviewing the municipal ownership movement, Mayor Dunne said: "I can confidently assert that it is almost invariably the rule that where utilities are furnished by private companies they cost from 50 to 100 per cent more than where the same utilities are furnished by the public companies." He vigorously defended himself against statements which had been published that he had recanted his faith in municipal ownership, saying: "I am glad to state to you that the cause of municipal ownership is ardently espoused by me today as it has been for several years past, and that I am as confident of its ultimate consummation as I have ever been at any time in my life. I confidently predict, from what I know of the people of Chicago, that within a very short time it will have the proud distinction of being the first city in the United States to be in actual ownership of its own municipal street car system, and when once that great city has proved that municipalization of street car plants is an assured success it will mean that hundreds of other American cities will follow in her wake and accomplish an economic revolution to the great advantage of the citizens of this country."

MAYOR DUNNE declared that "Chicago is in earnest and when she says 'I will' today she will say 'I have done' tomorrow. That tomorrow in my opinion will be but a few months away." Other extracts from Mayor Dunne's Boston speech follow:

"Misrepresentation and mendacity have been freely resorted to by the press in Chicago in order to embarrass, impede and prevent the consummation of the municipalization of the street car systems."

"The fight between vested interests and the people is well under way, and I have no fears of the ultimate result."

"The movement in favor of municipal ownership of public utilities is advancing with tremendous strides all over the United States."

ACCORDING to Frederick Innes, the band master, Lindsborg, Kan., is entitled to rank as "the most musical town in the United States." Having declared this to be a fact, Mr. Innes says: "In the effete east I would be mobbed for making such a statement, but it's the truth. Lindsborg, numbering 2,000 souls, plastered over a monotonous prairie landscape, with wheat fields all around it; Lindsborg a typical, long-whiskered Kansas town is the only music center worthy of the name that this country boasts. It's soaked in music. It's music mad. Surprised? I never was more surprised in my life. If you were to find a man-eating tiger waiting on table in a grill room, you could not be more surprised than I was when we struck Lindsborg, Kan."

MR. INNES says that when his company arrived at Lindsborg the entire population was in waiting at the depot, and adds: "The baggage man at the depot was whistling the 'Messiah.' The bus man was humming a bit from one of the Wagner waltzes. The bellboys at the hotel were singing the 'Parsifal' motif over and over again. I couldn't make it out at all. The hotel was not to my liking, but it was the only one. The first thing I did was to go to a national bank to cash a check. I got into conversation with the cashier and complained of the hotel. 'I wish you would stay at my house,' the cashier said. 'You will be more comfortable there, and my wife and I would enjoy having you with us. We are both musical. My wife is a harpist, and I play the first cornet in the Lindsborg orchestra.' I accepted the invitation gladly and from my host and hostess I learned all about Lindsborg. There is a college there—Bethany college, they call it—which has a large music department. Everybody in the town has graduated from the college at one time or another and all have taken the course in music. They have a chorus in Lindsborg of 698 voices. Not bad for a 2,000 town, eh? Yes, and they have a big orchestra, too. Every year they give a big music festival. They generally

sing the 'Messiah.' This year they decided to go in for a bigger festival than usual; that's why they sent for us. That night's program was a musical revelation to me. I have trained many choruses, bigger ones than the Lindsborg, but never in my life had I heard such singing. They sang all four parts with a good quartet. A third of the town was on the stage, the rest were in the audience, with a liberal sprinkling of farmers. I never heard such thunderous, spontaneous and sincere applause."

REFERRING to the O. K. which the United States government has placed upon the Standard Oil magnate, the New York American says "Comment upon the useless and misleading publications occasionally issued at public expense by bureaus of the United States government is getting wearisome. Each new abuse seems worse than the last. But surely it was idiotic enough for the commissioner of education (William T. Harris), under the secretary of the interior (Ethan Allen Hitchcock), to send out a list of 'educational benefactors' without printing in it a eulogistic biography of John D. Rockefeller. These documents are distributed among schools and libraries. The persons—happily few—who may consult them will find this description of the methods by which Mr. Rockefeller built up the Standard Oil company: 'He early began to appreciate the efforts to secure cheap lighting—illumination. Crude petroleum was offensive to the smell. He saw what was needed, and out of his school chemistry he was aided in devising methods of purifying the crude oil, saying to one of his teachers: 'I think I can relieve this substance of its offensive smell.' His efforts were successful. Whale oil was disappearing from the market; the new substance was soon widely demanded by the trade; fabulous results followed his efforts.' Not a word there of the deadly rebate, nor the cold-hearted system of freezing out competitors, even though they were personal friends. The admiring commissioner of education only knows that Mr. Rockefeller took the bad smell out of petroleum—and incidentally affixed it to his name. One million to Yale ended President Hadley's earnest desire to ostracize trust magnates. Does the ten million to the general education board explain this eulogy from the pen of the commissioner of education?"

A BIT of interesting history, not entirely disconnected from insurance scandal, is given by Henry Loomis Nelson, writing in the Boston Herald. Lou Payn was New York's insurance commissioner when Mr. Roosevelt became governor. Senator Platt and Mr. Odell, who later became governor, recommended that Payn be reappointed. Mr. Roosevelt's suspicions had been aroused, and he ordered the examination of the books of a certain trust company in order to test the accuracy of some charges that had been made. Mr. Nelson says: "Mr. Payn will not be annoyed by the statement that he was at that time the most notorious lobbyist in Albany. His appointment was a scandal, but his reappointment was demanded by Mr. Platt and Mr. Odell, who were then the bosses of the republican party of the state. Mr. Roosevelt had refused, very properly, to consider the demand, and he desired some evidence, not to sustain his determination, but with which to overwhelm Mr. Platt and Mr. Odell and prevent the senate from refusing to confirm Payn's successor. He discovered that Mr. William C. Whitney had loaned Mr. Payn, when the latter was in great distress, \$100,000. Incidentally he discovered that the trust company had loaned \$2,000,000 to an office boy. This office boy is said to have been Mr. Ryan's, and therefore that the loan was made to Mr. Ryan, to whom it could not have been made under the state law. It was also commonly believed that Mr. Root, as counsel for the trust company, had advised the loan. This is the Mr. Root who is secretary of state and who sometimes takes such high ground that all good citizens must commend him. At any rate, Mr. Root refused for some time to speak to Mr. Roosevelt because of this disclosure and for other reasons which Mr. Root said were evidences of treachery on the part of the then governor. The point is, of course, that the trust company was not discovered in its delinquency by the state

officers until the governor had occasion to make a case against the superintendent of insurance."

JUDGE BEN B. LINDSAY, of Denver's juvenile court, believes that in dealing with so-called "bad boys" one must appeal to their better natures. Judge Lindsay says that he has sent to the industrial school at Golden, Colo., forty-two boys. These boys were sent "on their honor," being told to report at the industrial school and being unaccompanied by an officer. Judge Lindsay says that not one of these lads failed to carry out his agreement. He says he is proud of this record, and well he may be. Many of these boys had criminal records,—some of them, as Judge Lindsay says, "entirely out of proportion to their ages," but every one of them showed that there was something good in him.

REFERRING to his experiences Judge Lindsay says: "In many instances the police have warned me against permitting certain offenders to have the chance of skipping and have entered an emphatic protest against my plan of allowing these boys to go to the school alone. But I have never been thrown down in any instance. See what it proves: There is always some good in every boy, no matter what his previous surroundings or his life may have been, if you only go about it in the right way to find that good. Take the case of Earl Wert, which I had last Saturday. Earl was arrested by the police on the charge of robbing a saloon. He is 15 years old, big and burly for his age and considered a hopeless case by the authorities. He inveigled four younger boys to help him in the robbery. I had Earl before me last Saturday, talked to him for more than an hour, secured his confidence and the boy told me everything of his past life. I know every bad habit the lad has. I decided to send him to the reform school. 'Don't send him alone,' the police said. 'He will make a break for liberty as sure as you do.' I gave him 60 cents for his fare. He got on a car at Fifteenth and Tremont streets, transferred at the 'loop,' took the Golden car and again transferred at First street. Here is the return from the superintendent showing that Earl reported to him. Further, the boy returned to me of his own free will the money in excess of his fare that I had given him. It came with the report from the superintendent. That isn't bad for a boy who was arrested and confessed to robbery. Another thing I wish to emphasize: 'Oh, you don't send any more boys to the reform school,' say the people. But I do, through only when I give the boys a chance and find them too weak to be good at home. This method has saved the city at least \$1,000 since I began sending the boys without an officer. I would like to see the city council appropriate that amount into a fund for a public playground or some other juvenile improvement. The taxpayers are interested in this and should approve the idea."

WASHINGTON dispatches say that several thousand requests have been received at the interior department for copies of the John D. Rockefeller tribute issued under the authority of the interior department. It is claimed that the sketch was written by General John Eaton, former commissioner of education, who is an intimate personal friend of Mr. Rockefeller. This highly complimentary reference to Mr. Rockefeller has been sent to every high school of the country. When questioned as to why the government had issued this eulogy of the Standard Oil magnate, Commissioner of Education Harris said: "That work was written six years ago. General Eaton was a Cleveland man and a teacher in the Cleveland schools under Everett C. White. He was most familiar with the man and his works, therefore best fitted to write of him, particularly on this topic. General Eaton was connected with this department during the time of Grant's administration. He knew all of the big men of the country. He did not get the facts from Mr. Rockefeller, so far as I know. We did not single out Rockefeller for any other reason than because he was the patron of education in large sums of money and had advanced the cause. This, we felt, was justifiable. We printed 39,000 volumes of the report and sent out 20,000 of them. Congress sent out 19,000." Although the article may