

# CURRENT TOPICS

NEBRASKA DEMOCRATS held their annual dinner at Lincoln on February 14. Dr. P. L. Hall, national committeeman, presided. The speakers and their subjects were as follows: Payne-Aldrich bill; who for it? Who against it? W. H. Thompson, Grand Island. Self reliance, James C. Dahlman, Omaha. Original insurgents, Richard L. Metcalfe, Lincoln. Nebraska democracy, Governor Ashton C. Shallenberger. Centralization, James A. Reed, Kansas City. Five hundred democrats from all sections of the state were present.

A QUAIL STORY is told in a Hunter's Hot Springs, Mont., dispatch carried by the Associated Press in this way: "Fifteen little mountain quail are being brought up by hand by Mr. and Mrs. Clark Ireland of Racine, Wis., who are spending the spring months here. The mother of the brood was killed accidentally by Mrs. Ireland when she went to the clothes press in her room to get out her 'merry widow' hat. The young quail then were discovered. The mother bird had found her way into the room from the hotel veranda and made her nest in the hat. A quantity of canary bird seed on a nearby shelf had kept the mother and her youngsters alive up to the time of their discovery, and the baby quail now are so well grown that they eat all sorts of food and are becoming tame."

AT CIUDADELA, Balearic Islands, speaking to a correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald, Marcel Rodel, the sole survivor of the steamer General Chanzy, which was wrecked on a reef off the island of Minorca, told a thrilling narrative, prior to his departure for France, of the terrible experiences of the steamer. He said: "At 5 o'clock I was awakened by a splitting crash and fled to the deck. Darkness added terror to the frightful scene. Enormous seas were breaking over the steamer. One sea ripped off a railing to which a score of women and children were clinging. Being an excellent swimmer, I allowed myself to be carried off by the next wave. The next moment the air was rent by a violent explosion, the wreckage shooting over my head." Rodel took refuge in a grotto at the base of a high cliff, where he passed a day and a night.

THE BRIBERY revelations at Albany show that the New York republican machine is rotten to the core. Every day some new expose is made. The Lincoln (Neb.) Journal, a republican paper, says: "The political situation in New York has been turned squarely around in the twinkling of an eye by the graft disclosures. The republican machine has been caught with some of the goods, and this adds to the confusion caused by the disclosures of systematic bribery. Up to this time Governor Hughes has been opposed sullenly and defiantly in all of his reform measures by the organization. Now overwhelming defeat stares the party in the face unless the governor's plans are carried out and unless Governor Hughes becomes a candidate for re-election or induces some strong man representing his ideas to make the race. The immediate effect of the investigation ought and doubtless will be the abandonment of the machine opposition to the governor's program. He is asking for direct nominations, an enlargement of the scope of the public service commission to cover telegraphs and telephones, the conservation of water power, and some other measures along these lines. If the party does not follow Governor Hughes now it will almost certainly be wiped off the slate at the next election."

ALL WASHINGTON is interested just now in the story of how Mr. Taft lost a buckskin shirt. An Associated Press dispatch tells the story in this way: "The official pomp and ceremony of the White House conquered Bah-Tse-It-Coo-Roos (White-Man-Runs-Him) and a Crow scout who fought with Custer, and therefore President Taft did not receive a beautiful buckskin Crow shirt that the squaws of the Crow reservation in Montana had worked overtime to

fashion. White-Man-Runs-Him, with a dozen other Indians from the Montana reservation, called to pay their respects to the Great White Father. In the party were Curley, another Custer scout, Held-the-Enemy and Sees-With-His-Ears. The braves desired to greet the president and show their esteem for the Great White Father by presenting him with a Crow war shirt, thus making him a chief of their tribe. White-Man-Runs-Him, as the leader of the delegation, was entrusted with the buckskin garment and given instructions as to presenting it. In the White House he misplaced his native courage and when the Indians entered the president's sanctum White-Man-Runs-Him was appalled at the greatness of the Great White Father. He hastily concealed the war shirt beneath the coat and fled. The rest of the delegation proceeded to upbraid White-Man-Runs-Him and after much discussion it was decided that the shirt will be sent to the president when the Indians reach a safe distance from the terrors of official etiquette."

A PATHETIC scene in the house of commons is described in a London cablegram carried by the Associated Press in this way: "For the first time since he was stricken with paralysis years ago, Joseph Chamberlain appeared in the house of commons today and took the oath as a member of the new parliament. The advent of the tariff reformer afforded a dramatic surprise for the officials and members who were being sworn in. Mr. Chamberlain moved to the speaker's chair and shook hands with Mr. Lowther, after which he made his way slowly from the chamber within which so many stirring episodes of his life have occurred. The whole scene was painful to those who recalled the vigor exhibited by the statesman on his last previous appearance in the house. Today his frame was shrunken and his features ashen. He was unable to move without assistance and but haltingly whispered the words of the oath after his son had spoken them in his ear. It was evident to those who witnessed the every evidence of extreme weakness that all hope of a recovery from physical infirmities must be abandoned. There was perfect silence throughout the trying ordeal."

MR. TAFT SPOKE before the New York Republican club on Lincoln day and the principal points made in his speech are given by the New York World in this way: "No one responsible for a government like ours would foolishly run amuck in business and destroy values and confidence just for the pleasure of doing so. It does rest with the national government to enforce the law, and if the enforcement of the law is not consistent with the present method of carrying on business, then it does not speak well for the present methods of conducting business, and they must be changed to conform to the law. During his—Roosevelt's—two terms in office, by almost what may be compared to a religious crusade, he aroused the people to a point of protecting themselves and the public interests against the aggressions of corporate greed, and has left the public opinion in an apt condition to bring about the reforms needed. "We did revise the tariff. It is impossible to revise the tariff without awakening the active participation in the formation of schedules of those producers whose business will be affected by a change. Nothing was expressly said in the platform about a revision downward. The implication was that it was to be generally downward. The change which this tariff effected was a marked change downward in the rate of duties, and it was a recognition by the party that the time had come when, instead of increasing duties, they must be decreased." He approved the vigorous enforcement by the administration of the statute against rebates on the part of railroads. He advocated that the interstate commerce law should be further amended so as to give railroads the right to make public traffic agreements subject to the approval of the commission. He declared that the great advantage of a postal savings bank is the encouragement to thrift of those whose fears of the solvency of any depository except those controlled by the

government tempts them away from saving. Concerning the coming congressional election he said: "If the other measures to which I have referred are enacted into law and the party pledges of the republican party are performed, there would seem to be no good reason why the party should not receive renewed approval by the electors of the country in the coming congressional campaign."

THAT THE president's speech on Lincoln day was "not loftier in tone than the petty partisan cheapness of Cannon" is the opinion expressed by the Philadelphia North American, a republican paper. The American adds: "The extent of our regret may be measured by the depth of the descent of a national discussion of republicanism to the sordid plane of Cannonism. It was deplorable also that the president spoke as he did to the whole people immediately after having stooped to a conference with state bosses, including the smirched Depew and Tim Woodruff, the patron of Allds, where the debate concerned the proper course to pursue in a bribery case—whether it would be 'better for the party' to cover up legislative scoundrelism or encourage thorough and honest investigation and punishment."

AN "OLD republican" writes to the New York World to say: "President Taft's views on the Payne-Aldrich tariff, as expressed at the Lincoln banquet of the Republican club, are a mass of special pleading. The speech is even more remarkable for what it omitted than for what it contained. Knowing that the income tax amendment to the constitution is in great danger, the president did not say a word to help it along. Why does he not come forward boldly and urge the ratification of the amendment? Is he, perhaps, held back by the influence that induced him take the astounding and unprecedented step of sending a personal cable to the regent of China to compel that potentate to borrow money from the J. Pierpont Morgan-Kuhn-Loeb syndicate for railroad purposes, and that induced him to send Robert Bacon, Mr. Morgan's former partner, as ambassador to Paris?"

THE HEYBURN incident in the United States senate impressed the Washington (D. C.) Herald as an opportunity for the senate to show itself in its best light. The Herald says: "Neither the fate of empire nor the destiny of man hung on the senate's decision as to whether a few old veterans of the late confederacy should be permitted the use of a number of army tents and things during the progress of a forthcoming reunion in Mobile. The proposition as submitted by Senator Bankhead meant little in itself. Unemphasized by Senator Heyburn's foolishly bitter tirade against the late wearers of the gray and their loved and chivalric leader, General Robert E. Lee, the resolution would have passed quietly and in order on Monday last, and nothing untoward would have come of it whatever. The dead past has long ago been permitted to bury its dead in the matter of secession, the civil war, and all that appertains to that fratricidal strife, and it is only here and there that a Senator Heyburn comes upon the scene with his feeble effort to stir it up anew. The senate rose superbly to the demands of the crisis thrust upon it by Mr. Heyburn's vociferous vehemence, however, and voted to a man—saving and excepting Mr. Heyburn himself—to grant the petition as originally filed by Mr. Bankhead; and that despite the Idaho senator's jarring solo of protest. The quiet dignity of the entire proceeding that marked the undoing of Mr. Heyburn was inspiring, and could hardly have failed to arouse a feeling of profound respect for the senate even in the bosom of the most hardened scuffer. 'Aye!' said New York, and Washington, and Kansas, and Wisconsin, and Indiana, and Minnesota, and Utah, and California, and Vermont, and Ohio, and Michigan, and Maine, and so on throughout the entire union—of course, including the south. Idaho's voice alone was raised in opposition—and only half of that, indeed, since Senator Borah voted 'aye.' We think it