

# CURRENT TOPICS

**MAYOR WEAVER**, of Philadelphia, has formally declared for municipal ownership under municipal civil service law. Newspaper readers have recently become familiar with Mayor Weaver's record. Concerning him the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Mayor Weaver has been mayor of Philadelphia since 1903, and at the last November elections aided in wrecking the vicious Durham machine at the polls. He also vetoed the infamous gas lease, the fight on which roused the reform element throughout the state. Mayor Weaver is an Englishman by birth and 43 years of age. He has been a resident of this city since 1869. By hard work he gained an education, and is a lawyer of marked ability. For a time he served as district attorney and won distinction for procuring convictions in all the fraudulent election cases that he prosecuted. Mayor Weaver is a devout Baptist and teaches a Sunday school class. Over his desk in the city hall are the lines: 'For the cause that needs assistance, for the wrong that needs resistance for the future in the distance, all the good that I can do.'"

**SENATOR PATTERSON** of Colorado, who recently spoke in the senate in support of Mr. Roosevelt's Santo Domingo treaty, was subjected to considerable criticism at the hands of his democratic colleagues. The democratic caucus had agreed to oppose the treaty. Mr. Patterson introduced in the senate a resolution declaring that caucus dictation interfered with the public duty which a senator was expected to discharge. A debate marked with bitterness followed on this resolution. Mr. Patterson was arraigned by Senator Bailey and other democratic senators, the senator from Texas saying that there was but one proper recourse left to Mr. Patterson and that was to change parties.

**MR. PATTERSON** DEFENDED his position on the ground that caucus dictation "stripped senators of every element of independence, and is liable to force them to disgrace their high offices or send them into oblivion." He declared that such a course brought the senate down to the level of an ordinary political meeting. He said he had always believed that in public office men were more important than platforms, and declared that the caucus rule did not provide for the conscience of the senator, adding that a senator should be true to his own convictions constituting himself a monitor of which he should stand in awe.

**SENATOR BAILEY**, of Texas, took issue with Mr. Patterson and the debate at times was extremely personal. Senator Bailey said that the caucus had simply defined the duty of senators as members of the democratic party and that it must be for Senator Patterson to determine his duty as a senator in contra-distinction to his duty as a member of the party. Senator Bailey then took up the defense of the caucus system and read an account of the proceedings of the caucus by which Mr. Patterson was nominated for the senate. He asked Mr. Patterson if he considered the same objections which he had made to senatorial caucuses to apply to caucuses for the choosing of candidates for the senate. Mr. Patterson replied that the two caucuses were not on the same footing because no oath was taken in the caucus for the choosing of candidates. Mr. Bailey retorted that the difference was not valid, saying that the members of the Colorado legislature must have taken an oath to perform their duties which duties included the election of United States senators.

**IN HIS SPEECH** defending his position Senator Patterson had paid high tributes to Mr. Roosevelt, comparing him with Andrew Jackson. Referring to this, Senator Bailey quoted from Mr. Roosevelt's "Life of Benton," a characterization of Andrew Jackson as "ignorant and hot headed," and Senator Bailey said he would leave it to Mr. Patterson to decide whether the president would feel complimented over the Colorado senator's comparison of himself to Jackson. Senator Bailey asserted that Mr. Patterson had bolted the last democratic caucus for Denver offices, and Mr. Patterson replied that the report

was entirely correct, saying that the democratic organization on that occasion was simply the tool of the utility corporations of the city and that those corporations nominated both the republican and democratic tickets.

**LATER IN THE DEBATE** Senator Bailey charged that Mr. Patterson had participated in the democratic senatorial caucus in 1903 in which the rule binding senators by a two-thirds vote of the caucus had been adopted, and that Mr. Patterson had voted for the resolution. Mr. Patterson said that the vote was cast without due reflection and that circumstances could not prevent a change of course when, after due investigation, he became satisfied that the demand of the caucus was in conflict with his sense of justice, and antagonistic to his duty as a senator.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY** has taken part in the beef trust case on trial before the federal court at Chicago. The attorneys for the packers sought to introduce a letter written by President Roosevelt to the attorney general, and he called upon Mr. Moody to produce the original of that letter. Mr. Moody consented to the introduction of a copy presented by the attorneys of the packers with the understanding that it should be subject to revision when compared with the original. After reading the copy Mr. Moody said that the statement made by Mr. Roosevelt to the effect that the department of commerce and labor had assisted the department of justice in the beef trust case was not correct. He asked permission to explain what he meant, but was not given the opportunity. The packers' attorneys placed great reliance upon Mr. Roosevelt's statement that the department of justice obtained material aid from the department of commerce and labor by reason of Mr. Garfield's report. If they are able to show that Mr. Garfield promised them immunity, and also that the department of justice depended upon the Garfield report, the proceedings against the packers will be dismissed.

**IN A NEWSPAPER** interview given after the adjournment of court Attorney General Moody, referring to his remarks concerning the statement contained in President Roosevelt's letter, said: "What I meant by inaccuracy was that the lawyers for the defense had placed an inaccurate construction on the words of the president. They seemed to believe the letter meant that the department of justice was aided by the department of commerce and labor in the grand jury investigation. That construction is not right. I have no objection to the introduction of the document—it is a copy of the original."

**THE HEPBURN RAIROAD** rate bill passed the house February . The vote scored 346 yeas and 7 nays. Those voting against the bill were Littlefield (Maine), McCall and Wees (Mass.) Perkins and Southwick and Breeland (New York) and Sibley (Pennsylvania)—all republicans. In closing the debate on the measure Mr. Hepburn said that the bill was intended to and did, so far as it could be made, comply specifically with the recommendations of President Roosevelt on the rate question. It gives the interstate commerce commission authority, when a rate has been complained of as "unreasonable" by a shipper, to investigate that rate, state whether or not it is unreasonable, and if found to be unreasonable, to name a rate which is to be just and reasonable and fairly remunerative, which is to be the maximum rate to be charged. This rate so fixed is to go into effect thirty days after it is announced by the commission, subject during that time to be set aside or suspended by the commission or by the courts. After it has gone into effect it is to remain the rate for three years. The opinion has been expressed by those who have participated in the debate that the rate may also be reviewed by the courts and, if found to be in conflict either with the terms of the act or with the constitution by being confiscatory, it can be set aside by the courts. Another important feature is the definition of the words "railroad" and "transportation" in a manner to include all aux-

iliary instrumentalities of the common carrier and to bring them within the control of the commission. This power to name a reasonable rate and the inclusion of the auxiliaries within the jurisdiction of the commission are said to be the new features. All other provisions are modifications of existing law. They include publicity of railroad methods, which is to be aided by prescribing a system of bookkeeping, and enlarging the commission to seven members and increasing salaries of members to \$10,000 a year.

**SENATOR TILLMAN** recently presented to the senate a petition from the Red Rock Fuel company of West Virginia complaining that the Baltimore & Ohio company had refused to permit the petitioner to connect its tracks with those of the Baltimore & Ohio. Referring to this petition Mr. Tillman called attention to the fact that the time the petition was presented Senator Elkins had said that there was a remedy under the state laws of West Virginia. Mr. Tillman then presented a letter from Governor Dawson of West Virginia complaining of the difficulty in administering the laws. The governor added: "It may be that the Pennsylvania Railroad company does not legally own a controlling part of the Baltimore & Ohio company or the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway company or the Norfolk & Western Railway company, but I have no doubt that an investigation will show that the Pennsylvania Railroad company practically controls these three great lines which traverse West Virginia and which are the only means whereby the products of this state, including coal, can be shipped to either the lakes in the west or other markets in the east. Hence it is a fact that West Virginia today is in the grasp of a railroad trust which practically says what part of the state shall be developed and what shall not be developed, how much coal shall be shipped out of the state, to what points or ports it shall be shipped and when it shall be shipped. Of course it makes its own rates and we are helpless. The Pennsylvania railroad is very largely interested in the production or shipment of bituminous coal; it will naturally look after its own interest and the interests of the people along its lines in Pennsylvania and elsewhere first of all, and therefore the interests of West Virginia are subordinated to the interests of these others and our railroads upon which we are dependent are controlled by an alien corporation practically in competition with us."

**THOMAS W. LAWSON** recently paid a visit to Governor Johnson, of Minnesota, and persuaded the governor to co-operate with him in the effort to place the control of the New York Life and the Mutual Life Insurance companies in the control of their policyholders. After an extended conference with Mr. Lawson, Governor Johnson expressed the opinion that Mr. Lawson "has a card up his sleeve that will astonish the folks." Mr. Lawson said that the committee in charge of this work will be Governor Johnson, Governor Broward, former Attorney General Monnet of Ohio, and Fremont Older of San Francisco. Other names will be added later. Lawson said that he has enough proxies to control the vote in the New York Life and the Mutual Life. The New York Life's meeting will be held April 7, and the Mutual's meeting will be held June 14. Mr. Lawson says that he is anxious to get 50,000 or 75,000 men on hand where he can talk to them.

**GOVERNOR CUMMINS**, of Iowa, has formally announced that he will be a candidate for a third term as governor. National politics will enter into the Iowa contest, Governor Cummins being a pronounced tariff revisionist. The stand-patters have practically united on George Perkins, editor of the Sioux City Journal, and it is freely predicted that the contest will be one of the most heated political fights which ever took place in Iowa.

**THE COUNTESS BONI DE CASTELLANE**, formerly Anna Gould, daughter of Jay Gould, has filed a petition in the French courts asking for a divorce and the custody of her two children. Efforts at reconciliation have been made, but declaring that she has been patient

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