

CURRENT TOPICS

JUDGE O'SULLIVAN, of New York, in making answer to the presentments submitted to him by the grand jurors, practically took issue with Mr. Jerome. The Associated Press, under date of New York, March 23, says: "If the grand jury, which is investigating some of the conditions developed by the recent legislative investigation, reaches the conclusion that contributions of insurance company funds to political campaign committees were made with intent to derive or defraud the true owner of his property it must find that larceny was committed. This opinion was expressed today by Justice O'Sullivan in the court of general sessions in answer to presentments submitted to him by the grand jurors. Judge O'Sullivan added that it is not within the province of the court to say whether or not there was intent. That is a question which the jurors must determine for themselves from all the facts and circumstances in the case. He charged the jury to make a thorough investigation into all the facts and to place the responsibility for such crimes if they find that crimes were committed."

WHEN JUDGE O'SULLIVAN'S opinion was delivered Mr. Jerome was in the court room, and when the judge concluded, the district attorney asked the grand jury to remain, as he desired to address them upon the subject. The Associated Press report says: "Mr. Jerome declared that Judge O'Sullivan had misconceived the subject which he had considered, and that if the court held to its opinion it would be the duty of the grand jury to return indictments against George W. Perkins, former vice president of the New York Life Insurance company, for larceny and George B. Cortelyou and Cornelius N. Bliss, treasurer of the republican national committee as receivers of stolen goods. Mr. Jerome informed Judge O'Sullivan that if he would sit as a magistrate he would submit affidavits to the acts committed by George W. Perkins and would ask for a warrant being issued, a writ of habeas corpus would follow, and that the case would be taken to the highest courts, where the district attorney would retain Alton B. Parker as special counsel. Judge O'Sullivan declined to grant the warrant, giving as his reason that the question at issue should be passed upon by the grand jury. After Judge O'Sullivan had delivered his remarks to the grand jury there was some question as to their exact import, one portion of the judge's remarks dealing with the question of intent in such a manner as to make it appear that it was the duty of the grand jury to consider the matter of intent as to whether larceny had been committed. Judge O'Sullivan's statement that there was larceny was made in answer to the hypothetical question put to him in which certain suppositions were accepted as facts. The suppositions dealt with the making of contributions by authority of insurance officials."

PRIOR TO THE city elections in the fall of 1905 representatives of both parties in Columbus, Ind., signed an agreement promising that neither money, liquor nor anything of value would be used by either side for the purpose of influencing the vote of any elector. It was further agreed that each committee would, prior to election day, submit a full report to the other of the money collected and the source of the same, and that after this report had been made no further contributions would be received by either committee. Also that within ten days after the election each committee would make a report showing the disbursement. It was further agreed that there would be no assessment of candidates for city offices except such assessments as would be agreed upon by the final agreement of both parties.

WALTER C. GALBRAITH, editor of the Columbus (Ind.) Democrat, writing to The Commoner says: "This agreement was carried out to the letter and it redounded to the interest of the democratic party, just as the same thing would all over this country. Our county committee has adopted the same plan for the campaign this year, but the republicans will refuse to sign it, and will return to the old methods of corruption. The honest vote of this nation is with democracy. Let us all do what we can to dis-

place corruption with honest and moral principles, and thus elevate the moral standing of our country as well as to restore democratic principles."

J. H. McINTOSH, general counsel for the New York Life Insurance company, announced immediately following Andrew Hamilton's now famous speech that the New York Life people would pay no attention to Hamilton, but since Hamilton delivered that speech every one who ever had any connection with the New York Life is paying some attention to the notorious lobbyist, and every few days Mr. Hamilton proceeds to make some new accusations. He charges now that in 1896 he paid to C. N. Bliss, treasurer of the republican national committee, \$75,000, taking Mr. Bliss's receipt for the same. He also charges that Elihu Root, while secretary of state of the United States, used his influence with Governor Higgins to prevent injury to Thomas F. Ryan's interest in the Equitable Life Assurance society. Secretary Root denies these charges, bluntly referring to them as lies. Mr. Bliss also denies receiving the money from Hamilton, but Hamilton produced what he says is a receipt bearing Bliss's name.

FEDERAL JUDGE J. OTIS HUMPHREY at Chicago passed on the immunity plea raised in behalf of the packers in the beef trust case. Judge Humphrey dismissed all the indictments against the packers and their employes, but said the indictments found against the corporations comprising the beef trust would stand. Judge Humphrey concluded his opinion in these words: "Under the law in this case the immunity pleas filed by the defendants will be sustained as to the individuals, and denied as to the corporations, the artificial persons, and the jury will find in favor of the government as far as the corporations are concerned, and against the government as far as the individuals are concerned."

IN HIS OPINION Judge Humphrey declared that the primary purpose of the law creating the commerce and labor department was to enable congress to provide through the channel of officials charged with the execution of laws remedial legislation. Judge Humphrey said that this law requires that information be given, and because the men interrogated could not remain silent they were entitled to immunity from prosecution. Associated Press reports say that the packing house people who were in the court room at the time expressed their great joy because of their deliverance, and that District Attorney Morrison "sat with bowed head for a short time after Judge Humphrey had concluded." The district attorney asked that the case against the corporations be set for trial within two weeks. The attorneys for the packers said that they could not be ready before next fall. Judge Humphrey told the lawyers to agree among themselves on a date for trial. The corporations which, under Judge Humphrey's decision, will stand trial are the Armour Packing Co., Armour & Co., Swift & Co., and the Fairbanks Canning Co. The individuals who, by Judge Humphrey's decision are released, are J. Ogden Armour, Edward Morris, Charles W. Armour, Ira N. Morris, Louis F. Swift, Edward F. Swift, Charles N. Swift, Edward Cudahy, Arthur Meeker, T. J. Connors, P. A. Valentine, A. H. Veeder, Arthur F. Evans, L. A. Carton, Robert C. McManus and D. E. Hartwell.

AS A RESULT of Judge Parker's suggestion that the democratic nominee for 1908 come from the south, Charles A. Edwards, secretary of the democratic congressional campaign committee, says that his state will furnish the leader in the person of Senator Culberson. Washington dispatches say that others believe that Senator Bailey should be the candidate. Responding to this, Secretary Edwards says that Texas can furnish the right kind of a man, and that while he prefers Senator Culberson first, Senator Bailey will be acceptable. One Washington dispatch says "there is every indication that careful plans are being made to give an entirely new turn to the contest in the next national convention of the party." This same dispatch says that Judge Parker and eastern democrats who brought about his nomination are as determined as ever to exercise control in the democratic convention of 1908.

It is said that they would not object to a renomination of Parker himself, but that if that is impracticable they would turn to Mayor McClellan of New York, and if they fail in that they "stand ready to join the movement from the solid south in accomplishing the defeat of the radicals in their party."

JAMES H. ECKELS, of Chicago, who was controller of the currency under the last Cleveland administration, gives an interview in connection with the Parker program, and says that he is "perfectly willing to consider a southern man for the presidency." Mr. Eckels adds: "The desirable qualities in such a candidate would be a belief in those things which are absolutely democratic and are wholly removed from populism. The democratic party can win if it is willing to be democratic; it can not win if it is not democratic. The south, being in the largest measure all there is left of organized democracy, has a great opportunity to name the next leader."

ANDREW HAMILTON, the insurance lobbyist, has created all sorts of trouble. He has caused it to leak out that aside from the \$50,000 contribution made to the republican campaign in 1896 by the New York Life, that company made an additional contribution during that campaign amounting to \$75,000, which made the contributions of that one company \$125,000 during one campaign. Cornelius N. Bliss, treasurer of the republican committee, has denied that he ever received the \$75,000, and referring to this denial, the New York World says: "Men familiar with the documentary evidence in the possession of Hamilton can not understand the denial of Cornelius N. Bliss that he ever received from Hamilton a political contribution amounting to \$75,000. The \$75,000 was paid to Mr. Bliss by Mr. Hamilton in the first McKinley-Bryan campaign, according to Hamilton's friends. As this was ten years ago it may have slipped out of the mind of Mr. Bliss. But Mr. Bliss has not qualified his denials by saying 'to the best of his recollection,' but has declared flatfootedly that he never received the money. A single contribution of \$75,000 is so exceptional in size that politicians can not understand the failure of Mr. Bliss to remember it. This \$75,000 brings the total of known political contributions by the New York Life up to \$223,000. The dozen trustees of the company who agreed last Saturday personally to reimburse the campaign for its political contributions, will have to dig much deeper into their pockets than they originally counted upon, and before Judge Hamilton is through with that subject the final total may be far in excess of \$223,000."

LOU PAYN, FORMER insurance commissioner for the state of New York, and one of Senator Platt's henchmen, declares that the \$148,000 which has all along been fixed as the amount contributed to the republican campaign fund by the New York Life does not represent any large share of the contributions of the company. Payn says that he does not believe that \$148,000 would even cover the amount contributed for the benefit of the republican party in New York state. He says: "I personally know of one corporation that subscribed \$50,000 to the republican and \$75,000 to the democratic fund in a single year, and it was not an insurance company, either. They always have done this and they always will, notwithstanding the present uproar." But they didn't contribute to both campaign funds in 1896 and in 1900, did they?

EVIDENTLY THE OPPONENTS of rate legislation are commencing to try the tactics of 1896. The Washington correspondent for the Sioux City Journal says: "The statement made by a senator, who, for obvious reasons, will not permit the use of his name, that within the past few days the representatives of the controlling interest in New York have informed the president that he can take the alternative of a conservative railroad rate bill or a panic. It is pointed out to him that conditions are ripe for the precipitation of a serious financial crisis and that this will be done if he insists on a radical rate bill."