

CURRENT TOPICS

S. W. McCALL, republican, member of the house from Massachusetts, has written to Seno E. Payne, chairman of the committee on ways and means, urging tariff revision. Mr. McCall cites the last national republican platform which, referring to the tariff, declared that "rates of duty should be re-adjusted only when conditions have so changed that the public interest demands their alteration," and that "to a republican congress and a republican president this great question can safely be intrusted." Mr. McCall says that the conditions have so changed that the public interest requires tariff revision, and on behalf of the republican members from Massachusetts, who authorized Mr. McCall to speak, he asked the ways and means committee to consider the tariff with a view of its revision and readjustment.

REPLYING TO Mr. McCall, Chairman Payne says that he is thoroughly in sympathy with the national platform that rates of duty should be readjusted, etc. He says that conditions are not now such that the public interests demand a change. He admits that there is a group of members in the house who believe that a few changes should be made, but that a majority of the republicans of the house do not concur in the opinion that there should be a general revision of the tariff. He says that congress is not prepared to review the tariff schedules "in that calm, judicial frame of mind so necessary to the proper preparation of a tariff act at a time so near the coming congressional elections." Mr. Payne makes it very plain that there will be no tariff revision under the republican party.

WHITELAW REID, ambassador at the court of St. James, has been criticised for wearing knee breeches at state functions in England. In an article on the opening of parliament the London Daily Mail said it was noted with much interest that "America's representative had in some degree relaxed the customary severity of the republican attire. It was seen that for once he had assumed knee breeches."

THE BUFFALO (N. Y.) TIMES reminds its readers that significance attaches to long trousers. The Times says: "At the time of the French revolution the nobility and upper class of people generally in France, wore knee breeches. The masses of the people, however, were taking to long trousers. Because they did not wear knee breeches they were spoken of as the sans culottes, meaning, literally, 'without breeches.' When the revolutionists won, long trousers, therefore, became a symbol of triumphant democracy, and knee breeches were never thereafter worn by good French republicans. With us Washington and some of the other founders of the country never wore anything except knee breeches. It was not until afterward that the French meaning attached to long trousers became prevalent here. There is, therefore, less reason against an American republican wearing knee breeches, if he wants to, than there is against a French republican wearing them. At London court functions all men who attend must wear knee breeches. French ministers have always so worn them. The only exception ever made was in favor of President Loubet of France, who attended King Edward's court balls in the conventional evening dress suit with long trousers. It might, therefore, appear that a French president has more respect for the republican tradition in respect to trousers than an American ambassador."

NO PUBLIC MAN has ever lost supporters so rapidly as District Attorney Jerome of New York has during the past two weeks. It will be remembered that he filed with Judge O'Sullivan a brief holding that the insurance officials could not be prosecuted for the payment of campaign funds to the republican party, and then when Judge O'Sullivan took issue with him Mr. Jerome showed considerable feeling. Later Judge O'Sullivan instructed the grand jury that they must make a thorough investigation of these campaign contributions and must demand of the district attorney the evidence in his possession. Subsequently Mr. Jerome appeared before Magistrate

Moss and secured a bench warrant for the arrest of George W. Perkins, who is charged with paying \$48,000 of insurance funds to the republican committee. Mr. Jerome's best friends seem to be unable to explain the peculiar position he has taken with respect to the prosecution of the insurance magnates. The New York World and other newspapers that supported him during the campaign have turned upon him, and many men who were prominent in advocating his re-election have deserted him. As soon as the warrant was issued by Magistrate Moss Mr. Perkins' attorney applied to the New York supreme court for a writ of habeas corpus, and they hope to have that body declare that the misappropriation of policyholders' money for the use and benefit of the republican party is not larceny.

THE REFUSAL OF THE house committee to adopt the scheme of federal control of life insurance is interpreted by the Johnstown (Pa.) Democrat as "in some respects the hardest blow of all the smashing blows rained upon President Roosevelt by the present congress." The Democrat says Mr. Roosevelt is bound to feel the effect of this blow, as in this instance he had little popular support to fall back upon, as he had in the matter of the Philippine tariff and some other proposals to which he had committed himself. The Democrat says that Mr. Roosevelt's attitude on the insurance question was taken "in almost open defiance of the more cautious advice of some of his ablest partisans, and he took but little, if any, account of the legal phases of the problem involved."

THE DEMOCRAT thinks it more than significant that the members of the house committee, well knowing that Mr. Roosevelt was behind the federal control of insurance schemes, subscribed in their report to the following declaration: "Let it be said kindly, but not offensively, that it is a monstrous doctrine, subversive of our dual system of government even to suggest that the federal government, created by the states, can take from the states the power they have always enjoyed and which is expressively reserved to them by the constitution. Hamilton himself never made such a claim."

UNOFFICIAL DISPATCHES from Manila published March 18 stated that such women and children as were killed were "killed at long range by shell fire." The Springfield (Mass.) Republican says: "This and other statements of the same dispatch have been used by administration papers in defense and extenuation of the slaughter. Some of the statements were employed by the New York Tribune in the way of explaining and excusing the affair. But it will be seen that General Wood says the killing of women and children took place in 'hand-to-hand fighting' and not from long range shell fire. Meantime, however, what does General Wood mean by saying that the sensational cables were made up in Manila and that there have been no references to the killing of women and children 'in any cable from Mindanao,' etc.? Is it the intention to deny that any such thing happened right in the face of his own cable of a week ago that such a thing did happen? Or do we have here a deceiving play upon the words 'in any cable from Mindanao'—all sent to Washington at high cable rates? It is certainly an extraordinary dispatch—this last one, and no wonder they are puzzled at Washington about it."

CABLING FROM MANILA, March 19, General Wood said: "Sensational cables sent to the United States relating to the Mt. Dajo fight were made up in Manila. There has been no reference in any cable from Mindanao to the killing of women and children. On receipt of Colonel Andrew's condensed report from me in Washington, the American newspapers cabled for other information than was contained in my report to Colonel Andrews, and supplied sensational features."

REFERRING TO General Wood's cablegram the Springfield (Mass.) Republican says that the war department is greatly mystified by General Wood's dispatch. The Republican says: "The

fight took place March 6-8, and the official news of it reached this country on the 9th in the form of a report from Colonel Andrews at Manila, condensing a report received there from General Wood at 'Camboango' (Zamboanga?). This stated merely that 'about 600' Moros were killed. March 11 the American newspapers published unofficial dispatches from Manila saying that the military authorities at the seat of the trouble had refused further information to the press, but adding: 'An unofficial report says that the families of the Moros remained in the villages located in the center of the crater at the apex of the mountain, and the women and children mingled with the warriors during the battle to such an extent that it was impossible to discriminate, and all were killed in the fierce onslaught. Major General Wood is not available at present to confirm the report.' This was the first intimation conveyed that women and children had been in the fight and had been killed in greater or less number."

THEN CAME THE outcry in the United States over the killing of women and children. Secretary Taft thereupon cabled General Wood for information. The Republican says: "This was furnished, and appeared in a letter sent to President Roosevelt by Secretary Taft March 13, General Wood's dispatch having been received that day. This dispatch, inclosed in Secretary Taft's letter, said, among other things: 'I was present throughout practically entire action and inspected top of crater after action was finished. Am convinced no man, woman or child was wantonly killed. A considerable number of women were killed in the fight—number unknown—for the reason that they were actually in the works when assaulted and were unavoidably killed in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting which took place in the narrow, inclosed space. Moro women wore trousers and were dressed and armed much like the men. The children were in many cases used by the men as shields while charging the troops.'"

A NEW YORK NEWSPAPER asks: "The bureau of corporations may be useful as an incentive to campaign fund generosity, but of what public value has it been during its three years of existence? What excuse is there for continuing it?" Attorney General Moody's remarks in the beef trust case provide the answer to that question. Mr. Moody said that if the immunity plea of the packers were sustained, "Washington will become the Alsatia to which all can resort for the pardon of their offenses. All of the people who are violating the laws of the land may go there at intervals and obtain their immunity from punishment. I can fancy Mr. Swift and Mr. Armour meeting some great magnate who has been there, and who has washed in what I may call 'Miller's bath' in order to be cleansed of misdoing—I can imagine them meeting and saying, 'Good morning Mr. Rockefeller; have you had your immunity bath this morning?'"

MAJOR CARRINGTON, a United States army officer was recently convicted of embezzling \$1,500 while serving under the civil government in the Philippines. He was tried and sentenced to sixty years in the penitentiary. Pointing out that this sentence is beyond the natural expectation of life, the Pittsburg Dispatch says: "It would certainly be wiser to have inflicted a 10-year term on Major Carrington and to have saved the other fifty for distribution among the embezzlers of considerably larger amounts in the United States who generally escape with five or six year terms—if they are convicted at all." Some of these "fifty years" might be advantageously distributed among the men who embezzled the money belonging to the policyholders.

THE MISSOURI AUTHORITIES are not the only seekers after John D. Rockefeller. Indeed, it is claimed by the Philadelphia North-American that Mr. Rockefeller has not been dodging the Missouri authorities, but has really been in hiding from federal marshals. It is