

# CURRENT TOPICS

THE EIGHT-HOUR BILL has been favorably reported to the house. The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says: "It was far from the intention of the republican leaders to let the bill get a place on the calendar at this session." But this correspondent adds: "A combination of circumstances and democratic shrewdness in taking advantage of an opportunity brought the committee on labor to unexpected action." The Record-Herald correspondent explains: "There were only six of the thirteen members of the labor committee present this morning when hearings on the bill were resumed. They were Gardner of New Jersey and Goebel and Norris of Ohio, republicans, and Hunt of Missouri, Stanley of Kentucky, and Rainey of Illinois, democrats. A speech in opposition to the measure was being made by the representative of a ship-building firm, when Representative Hearst of New York, a member of the committee, having arrived in Washington on one of his irregular visits, strolled into the room. His presence made just a quorum, with the democrats one in majority. Breaking the shipbuilding representative off in the middle of his argument, Representative Hunt sprung a motion to close the hearing then and there. The republican members of the committee sent hurry calls for the absentees, but there was no response, and Mr. Hunt's motion prevailed. Then Representative Rainey made a motion that the bill be reported to the house with the recommendation that it pass. It was carried. The members of the committee who were not present were Bartholdt of Missouri, McCall of Massachusetts, Vreeland of New York, Connor of Iowa and Perkins of Vermont, republicans, and Davis of West Virginia, democrat."

THE EIGHT-HOUR BILL applies to all work in which the federal government is interested, whether done directly under the supervision of the government itself or by contract with private firms. It therefore affects not only work on public buildings and the like, but the construction of vessels in shipyards throughout the country, and it is from the latter class of industry that much of the opposition to the measure has emanated. The Record-Herald's Washington correspondent says: "The politics involved in the proposed legislation forms one of the most important phases of the subject. A few months ago when the high officials of the organization affiliated with the American Federation of Labor brought their petition of grievances to President Roosevelt, Speaker Cannon and President Pro Tem. Frye of the senate, they dwelt particularly on the eight-hour proposition. It was complained that the present eight-hour law was not enforced with any degree of worth to the great body of employes whom it was designed to reach, and it was charged the corporate influences were preventing efforts to secure more effective legislation. The measure whose passage was demanded re-enacted the provisions of the existing law and went still farther in extending its operations to all contract work, and everything, in fact, where the government is a party in interest. The threats made by the leaders of organized labor to carry their fight into the congressional elections next fall and hereafter to pledge all candidates for office to support of ideas favored by the laboring classes were predicated largely on the eight-hour proposition. Now that the eight-hour bill is actually before the house the labor leaders will have ample opportunity to show their power by marking those members who cast their votes against it, if it comes to a vote on its passage. If a vote is not reached, it goes without saying that the democrats will make the most of the situation in their campaign and will hold the republicans responsible for failure to put the bill through. The whole situation is one of the most interesting of those that have sprung into prominence at the tail end of the present session of congress."

UNDER DATE OF Jacksonville, Ill., May 28, the St. Louis Globe-Democrat prints the following dispatch: "Judge Owen P. Thompson today sent his resignation to Dr. Joseph R. Harker, president of the women's college, setting forth

that he could not longer remain a trustee of the college when they will accept money from Andrew Carnegie to apply on its endowment fund. Carnegie has recently given the college \$25,000. A year ago Judge Thompson resigned as a trustee of Illinois college because that institution had appealed to Andrew Carnegie for funds. William J. Bryan was president of the board of trustees of this school, and he also sent his resignation from Hong Kong, China, when he learned that a majority of the board favored approaching Carnegie and Rockefeller. Judge Thompson's resignation is a document of two thousand words, in which he states that he could not remain identified with an institution of learning wherein the management allows a policy which robs it of its independence to freely discuss all forms of social and economic questions and places the institution under obligations to capitalists. It was because Illinois college decided upon a policy of begging from Rockefeller and Carnegie that I resigned from that board."

A WRITER IN THE Chicago Record-Herald says: "In England a man with an income of \$2,000 a year pays \$62.50 in hard cash to the government each year as income tax. If his income is \$3,500 he must pay \$175, and for all incomes over that size the rate is the same—one-twentieth of the income. Only incomes of less than \$800 are entirely exempt. Also in England there is an inheritance tax so heavy that it absorbs 8 per cent of all estates of \$5,000,000 value or over, decreasing, however, for smaller estates, so that for the smallest it takes only 1 per cent of their value. From the inheritance taxes the British treasury gets upward of \$50,000,000, and from the income taxes upward of \$110,000,000 a year. Indeed, with a higher tax rate, the yield of the income tax has been as much as \$190,000,000 in Germany over 10 per cent of the income of the states comes from the income tax. In Italy over 16 per cent. In France over 2 per cent. In Japan about 5 per cent. In Sweden over 11 per cent. The inheritance tax, which gives England about 9 per cent of its total revenue, gives Belgium over 4 per cent, and is said to be in practical use in almost all of the European countries except Russia and the Balkan states. If President Roosevelt some day in the future decides that the time has come to 'formulate a system' for progressive inheritance taxes he will find plenty of material to aid him on the technical side in the experiences of many other countries with their progressive taxation. The income tax is forbidden to our federal government until the constitution is amended or the supreme court reverses itself, but the inheritance tax is within the power of congress to impose. These two forms of taxation can be made to do each other's work without great difficulty. If the president's plan should, however, ever be adopted in so radical a form that it would strike very deeply into the greater estates so as to permanently decrease their size, then the tables will be turned, and European nations will have to get their lessons from us."

WILLIAM SHARP, an English writer, died recently and his widow announced that he was "Fiona Macleod, a brilliant writer of Irish stories and poems whose identity has been the subject of much mystery. A writer in the Denver News says: "It was supposed that William Sharp had for some whim merely preferred to allow a certain class of his work to pass under a feminine nom de plume and, although this was remarkable, when the work under his unknown identity was greater than that under his own, nothing of psychological mystery was suspected by the general public. In the Fortnightly Review, however, the Irish novelist and poet, Katherine Tynan (Mrs. Hinkson) gives it as her belief that the two names represented two personalities: according to the phenomenon of multiple personality which the students of mind have been discovering frequently in late years. According to this idea, the Irish woman genius and the talented English author were really two distinct personalities, both using the same body. It is said that the handwriting of Fiona Macleod was quite distinct from that of William Sharp, and that the letters

he wrote as 'Fiona' voiced a sense of total difference in identity from William Sharp. A biography is to be issued by a physician who knew William Sharp well, and Mrs. Sharp is to assist in it. If, as is claimed, this physician believes that the two literary reputations for one man were the result of involuntary disassociation-in-personality the biography will be of great psychological interest, for while there have been many instances of the kind where the personalities were of the ordinary type, this would be the first case in which each identity gave itself literary expression and gained distinguished recognition. A careful biography, making plain the relationship between these two famous personages in one bodily form would be invaluable."

JUDGE SHEPPARD BARCLAY, of St. Louis, formerly a judge of the Missouri supreme court, visited Washington recently and in conversation with a representative of the Washington Post told of the success with which the People's Bank of St. Louis had recuperated from the fraud order issued against it several months ago. "It was charged that the bank was a scheme to defraud, and a receivership was appointed," said the judge. "Since then all the bank's debts and loans have been paid, the stockholders have received 85 per cent, and the supreme court of Missouri has recently decided that there was no ground at all for appointing a receiver. Now the same postoffice inspectors have charged the Lewis Publishing company, of St. Louis, which published two magazines for women that have circulations of over a million, with abusing their privileges in the mails. Edward G. Lewis, owner of the publications; Walter B. Stevens, secretary of the World's Fair company; a former governor of Missouri, and others are here to argue the case of the magazine before the assistant postmaster general."

REPRESENTATIVE GOULDEN of New York, recently testified before the house committee on judiciary. Mr. Goulden is also a representative in New York City of the Penn Mutual Life Insurance company of Pennsylvania. In his testimony before the committee Mr. Goulden said: "We were held up for \$10,000 by the republican national committee in 1896. The demand was persistent and insistent, and because of the influence or other methods used, the \$10,000 was contributed by the Penn Mutual. The company was not so much concerned in the election of either Mr. Bryan or Mr. McKinley. It was the powerful and convincing influence that caused the contribution to be made. Practically the same tactics were tried in 1900 and again in 1904, but without the insistence and persistence, and because of this the insurance companies did not give up as freely as they had done in 1896. Another thing that caused the companies to quit making campaign contributions after 1896 was the fact that the general counsel for the New England Mutual company of Boston, after considerable study, gave it out that in his opinion any board of directors of a mutual company voting campaign contributions was individually liable for the amount should the matter ever be contested by policyholders. This opinion had much to do with the refusal of the mutual companies to make contributions in 1900 and 1904."

DURING THE 1904 campaign demands were made, according to Mr. Goulden, to collect campaign funds from his insurance company. The contributions were not made. "The campaign committees stood ready and willing to take all we would give," Mr. Goulden said. "It was not their fault that every company in the United States did not contribute. All were invited to do so. Insurance companies in New York City have always been regarded as good things. It is a well known fact in New York City that an election to the state senate is regarded as being worth anything up to \$50,000 a year by the right men. This money came largely from the insurance companies. It has been no secret that large sums of money were spent in Albany each year by the insurance companies. Already the testimony before