

CURRENT TOPICS

BANK DEPOSITORS generally will be interested in an Associated Press dispatch under date of Butte, Montana, November 30. The dispatch follows: "Receiver Wilson of the wrecked Aetna bank of Butte, today announced that he had received a check from Augustus Heinze for \$100,000. Mr. Heinze formerly was president of the bank, but withdrew in 1903. Believing, however, that many depositors had not known of his withdrawal, although it was widely advertised at the time, and that through confidence in his reputation many of his friends may have lost their money. Mr. Heinze says in his letter to Mr. Wilson he contributes \$100,000 towards the bank's assets and forwards his check for that amount. The contribution should increase the bank's assets thirty per cent."

A NEW YORK clerk, age eighteen, engaged in "high finance." He persuaded a number of persons to invest in the stock of "The Eastern Trust company," a mythical organization. He secured \$10,000 before he was discovered. Wall Street is greatly disturbed because of the wickedness of this young man. Referring to the affair the Joplin (Mo.) Globe says: "An example surely should be made of this impudent young upstart for invading a field occupied by persons of grayer hairs and more eminent respectability. It is all well enough for beardless youths of New York to assist in minor capacities the schemes of the veteran financial prestidigitators, but let them not essay get-rich-quickness on their own account. If in the intricate shuffles of financiering it becomes necessary for the Standard Oil company, or the shipbuilding trust, or Depew land improvement buncoes to enlist as directors, office boys, messengers, janitors, etc., etc., why all right. For that sort of thing the country has the assurance from District Attorney Jerome that New York has no law under which criminal proceedings may be instituted. It is customary, and whatever is customary, Jerome implies, is O. K. But it isn't customary for mere goslings who need the money to fleece the innocent with the same shears as are employed by the venerably wealthy. So young Mr. Dillon has been arrested. He has waived examination and is being held in \$2,500 bond. Which is meet retribution for his amazing nerve. It is hoped Mr. Jerome will prosecute this case vigorously. The kings of finance, you know, would quickly have to abdicate unless pretenders to the throne were summarily disposed of."

JAMES MANAHAN, formerly of Lincoln, Neb., but now of Minneapolis, has been engaged by the Shippers Association of Minnesota to prosecute its rate cases against the railroads. The cases are being heard before the Minnesota railroad commission, and Mr. Manahan has been stirring up a lot of trouble for the railroads and some of their political henchmen. James J. Hill was on the stand a few days ago, but the commission denied Mr. Manahan the privilege of questioning the railroad magnate, saying that all questions must come through the attorney general. This action was denounced in fiery language by Mr. Manahan as "contemptible cringing to Mr. Hill." Mr. Manahan's criticisms of the commission grew so caustic that Judge Mills, white with anger, left the room, and the angry lawyer declared that Judge Mills had "sneaked away." Mr. Hill was on the stand practically all day and answered many questions concerning rates, classification and hauling freight, but Mr. Manahan was not allowed to put the witness on the rack concerning political contributions. "I want to ask Mr. Hill questions about political contributions," exclaimed Manahan, "and I claim the right to examine him as I have other witnesses. I shall attempt to ask these questions of Mr. Hill. I also insist that the commission at this time set a date for the hearing in the Matt Keefe case and the Hastings coal case, so I can subpoena Mr. Hill as our witness in these case while he is here. The commission's refusal to permit me to examine Mr. Hill is a flagrant and glaring attempt, inspired by fear, perhaps, to protect Mr. Hill from an examination that will not be pleasing to him. Mr. Hill said today that he had been attacked by every demagogue in Minnesota. Yet no one dared to ask him who were the demagogues.

This action is a cringing to the power of Mr. Hill and the Great Northern, and a contemptible cringing at that. I am going to keep this thing up, and get at the truth of this case, if I live," said Mr. Manahan, pounding the table. Mr. Manahan concluded by declaring that he would take the matter before the governor.

THE INTERESTING word comes from Des Moines that Secretary Shaw contemplates laying claim to be the real leader of tariff reform with a view to the resurrection of a presidential boom that his friends launched many months ago, and which seems to have shrunk considerably since the defeat of several leading "standpatters" for congress. It is stated that Mr. Shaw will declare in due time that when President Roosevelt was inaugurated he urged upon the president that he make immediate revision a part of his presidential program. The dispatch from Des Moines says: "It is regarded here as certain that Secretary Shaw will return to Iowa before next spring and enter actively upon his campaign for the presidential nomination. He recently turned down an offer of a \$50,000 position in New York and he did this after consultation with friends with special reference to his chances for the presidential nomination."

THE NEW YORK SUN prints the interesting information that during the last few months several thousand Porto Ricans have become American citizens through formalities required of out-and-out foreigners. In securing naturalization papers it is necessary for the foreigner making application to renounce "any allegiance to all foreign princes, potentates and powers." The Porto Ricans, while not American citizens under the modern interpretation of the constitution, owe no allegiance to any "foreign potentate," and owing to this fact it has been held that they could not become naturalized but must await some action that would take them in like those who lived in the territory included in the Louisiana Purchase. But the Porto Ricans have been asking for naturalization papers, and when put to the test have gravely foresworn allegiance to the King of Spain, although the king has had no dominion over Porto Rico for eight years. It is a peculiar situation. Having refused to let the Porto Rican become a citizen by honest and straightforward methods, we proceed to wink at what is little short of a dishonest method he has framed up to achieve his ambition to no longer be a "man without a country."

THAT THE WORKINGMEN of the country, especially the skilled workers, are doing a little thinking on their own account is evidenced by the action of Boston Machinists' Lodge No. 264. The advocates of the ship subsidy addressed a letter to the lodge urging its members to endorse the subsidy proposition and holding forth as an inducement the statement that more than 95 per cent of the benefits to be derived from the subsidy would go to workmen employed in building American ships. Many of the members of this lodge are employed in ship building, but the bait of the subsidy promoters was of no avail. The communication was gently dropped into the waste basket without action.

CONDUCTOR "BILLY" HEYWOOD of Kansas City seems in line for one of the Carnegie hero medals. Heywood is a Burlington conductor and captured a train robber who had looted the train. The robber entered the train at Slater, and backed by a huge revolver, went through the train, relieving the passengers of their purses and jewelry. Although the train was crowded no one had the courage to resist until Heywood entered the car. When the conductor appeared the robber thrust his revolver into the conductor's face and ordered him to throw up his hands. Heywood responded but later knocked the revolver out of the robber's hand and grappled with him. The two wrestled on the car floor for several minutes before any of the passengers made a move. Then two or three men went to the conductor's assistance and between them they se-

cured the robber, who was later turned over to the police at Kansas City. The robber's name is Truehart and he confesses to having robbed a Rock Island train near Kansas City a week or two before the Slater experience. He berated the passengers for their cowardice, but was loud in his praises of Heywood's courage.

HENRY J. SEAVER of Brooklyn makes this interesting contribution to the gaiety of the season in a letter addressed to the New York World: "There are two news items in today's edition that do not reconcile themselves. James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern, Northern Pacific and Burlington railroads, appeared before the interstate commerce commission at Minneapolis and disavowed owning any grain elevator stock at all. He added: 'No man in the Great Northern road can own stock in anything along the line of the road. If he does he must leave my employment, even if he were my own son.' The headlines of the other item read as follows: 'James J. Hill Cuts Ore Deal Melon. Total Profits Will be Five Hundred Million Dollars. Great Northern Shareholders to Get Equal Number of Shares in the Company. All of the Ore Stock in the Names of Mr. Hill's Three Sons as Trustees.' The item concludes by reading: 'The announcement to the shareholders was signed by James J. Hill president of the Great Northern and the largest beneficiary of the ore deal.' It seems to me that if 'no man can own any stock in anything along the line of the road,' then it is in order for Mr. Hill to discharge himself. As undoubtedly the World is very extensively read in Minnesota I suggest that if the county assessors do their duty where the ore beds are situated and tax that vacant mineral land fully what it is worth they could exempt all the houses in the state or the majority of the improvements entirely from taxation without raising the rate or diminishing the amount of revenue, and it would be an act of justice to the small home-owner who 'owns no stock in anything along the line of the road.'"

FORMER GOVERNOR DURBIN of Indiana is an advocate of tariff revision. The South Bend (Indiana) News, a republican paper, quotes Governor Durbin as saying: "The election results show that we need, as a party, to give a little more attention to our internal affairs. I believe, personally, that we ought to get to work on a revision of the tariff, and that right soon—possibly at a special session of congress called for that specific purpose soon after the fourth of next March."

MR. ROOSEVELT is having considerable trouble with his "swollen fortune" proposition. The Houston (Texas) Post wonders why some effort is not made to remove the cause for these "swollen fortunes." The Post says: "Granting that the danger is such as to warrant the interposition of governmental powers to protect the people from such vast estates as many Americans have accumulated within the past quarter of a century, is it best to deal with the mere effect or the causes? Take Mr. Carnegie's swollen fortune, for instance, which has been created by an extortionate tariff. Is it best to let the conditions which enabled Mr. Carnegie to accumulate his hundreds of millions continue, or to so change the laws that one will not be able to take from the public such unreasonable sums? Is it best to permit the rabid dog to run at large, and bite whom he will and administer the Pasteur treatment to his victims, or to kill the beast and put him out of the way of harm? No government is ever justified in using its taxing power for any other purpose than to obtain revenue to pay its legitimate expenses. If the swollen fortune is a menace, the president should deal with the causes and not advocate the misuse of one of the chief powers of the government. He should propose the withdrawal of every privilege which enables a citizen to exploit his fellow citizens. It is the process of accumulating the swollen fortunes which grinds the people. Stop the process and the people will be relieved and the excessive fortunes will cease to swell."