

CURRENT TOPICS

JOHAN ELLERTON has written some of the best of our modern hymns. A writer in the Portland, Ore., Journal says: "Ellerton's work was done less than fifty years ago, but much of it already is fixed among the classics of English religious poetry. 'The Evening Prayer for Peace' was written especially for one of the choir festivals which used to be common in England; it was intended for the closing piece at this gathering of choirs from many parishes. It now is one of our best known closing hymns:

Savior, again to thy dear name we raise
With one accord our parting hymn of praise;
We stand to bless thee ere our worship cease,
Then, lowly kneeling, wait thy word of peace.

Grant us thy peace upon our homeward way;
With thee began, with thee shall end the day;
Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
That in this house have called upon thy name.

Grant us thy peace, Lord, through the coming night,
Turn thou for us its darkness into light;
From harm and danger keep thy children free,
For dark and light are both alike to thee.

Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,
Our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife;
Then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,
Call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.

DURING the recent visit of Vice-President Fairbanks to Chicago the Press Club of that city—made up of the jolliest and best bunch of newspaper men imaginable—tendered him a reception at the Randolph hotel. Good stories were a feature of the evening, and one of them is so good that it deserves to go the rounds. The name of the teller is not given, but suffice to say he was a reporter well known for his wit and ability as a story teller. The story goes as follows: "The city editor of a sensational daily sent a reliable reporter out to take a look at heaven and write up a Sunday story. The reporter reached the pearly gates and encountered St. Peter. The old saint asked him what his business was and when he received the answer he threw up his hands in horror, at the same time barring the gates still tighter. 'Well, as long as I can't get in, wouldn't you be willing to let me interview you?' asked the reporter. He got an answer in the affirmative and began. 'St. Peter,' he said, 'the people on earth are interested in the relative values of time as between heaven and earth. Will you tell me the value of a minute in heaven?' 'One minute on earth is equal to about two hundred years in heaven,' said St. Peter. The newspaper man, thinking of rush copy and late stories for the early edition, liked the thought and pressed the saint further. 'You may know,' said the reporter, 'that the smallest coin in the United States is the 1-cent piece. What is that worth in heaven?' 'Your penny in heaven,' said St. Peter, 'is worth just \$200.' That impressed the reporter still more and, with a thought for his own welfare he smiled his most gracious smile and asked: 'St. Peter, will you kindly lend me a cent?' 'Surely, my boy,' said the guardian of the gates of heaven. 'Wait a minute and I'll get it for you.'

REFERRING to the record breaking dividends for the month of April, the Denver News says: "All classes of incorporations are included in the list—industrials, steam railroads, street railroads, metallurgical and mining concerns. At the very head of the list stands the United States Metals Selling company, with offices in London and New York. Their only visible investment is the fixtures in those offices, capitalized at the modest sum of \$5,000,000. The par value of the shares is \$100 and upon each of these shares the April dividend reaches \$7.50. This means \$30 per annum for each share, or \$1,500,000 in all, compared with \$1,000,000 in 1905. The company was organized in 1900, and has since paid \$4,875,000 in dividends. It is the culmination of the smelter trust, handling about nine-tenths of all the silver, lead, copper and zinc produced by American mines, and considerable of the product from Mexican mines. New York city's dividend total for the first week in April is placed at \$80,000,000. In April, 1906, the figure was \$66,400,000. Hence this year's gain

reads \$13,600,000, or over 20 per cent. Of this year's handsome total steam railroads claim \$34,483,960, compared with \$29,177,020 in April last year. The industrials are also gainers, with \$36,447,593 this year, compared with \$30,938,786 last year. Street railways come next with \$6,739,008, whereas in April last year, when stocks were exceptionally high, they paid \$5,791,840. Monday next the Union Pacific will pay out \$9,773,955 on its common and \$1,991,396 on its preferred shares. This will be the largest amount paid by any one company, and is the result of the increase in the common dividend to a 10 per cent basis. The leaders in the industrial class are the American Telephone and Telegraph company, the American Sugar Refining company, the American Smelting and Refining company and the Western Union Telegraph company. These corporations closely reflect conditions in the zones where they operate. In no instance is a decrease shown as compared with last year, while the American Telephone and Telegraph company has advanced its quarterly dividend from \$1,972,120 last year to \$2,631,020 for the quarter ending this week. Predictions of trade reaction have as yet to be justified by concrete facts. The loss of 'water' in Wall street is not half so destructive as floods in the west and south, where commodity prices continue favorable and the crop prospects are exceptionally good."

ON this same subject the Omaha World-Herald says: "It is said that Burlington gross earnings for this year will reach \$80,000,000. This prediction comes from the Wall Street Journal. The same authority estimates Union Pacific gross earnings at from \$73,000,000 to \$74,000,000. It is asserted the Union Pacific cannot well avoid paying a dividend equal to that of the past year, when the returns are in. In fact some figure that the real earnings of the company will afford a dividend of from 18 to 20 per cent, should all money available be turned into dividend paying purposes."

THE Harriman-Roosevelt correspondence recalls the charges made by Judge Parker, the democratic nominee in 1904, and Mr. Roosevelt's emphatic answer. In a speech delivered October 29, 1904, Judge Parker said: "As I have said before, and I deem it my duty to say it again, the trusts are furnishing the money with which they hope to control the election. I am sorry to be obliged to say it. If it were not true I would not say it to gain the presidency or any earthly reward." In his public statement issued November 4, 1904, Mr. Roosevelt said: "Certain slanderous accusations as to Mr. Cortelyou and myself have been repeated time and again by Judge Parker, candidate of his party for the office of president. Mr. Parker's charges are in effect that the president of the United States and Mr. Cortelyou, formerly Mr. Cleveland's executive clerk, then Mr. McKinley's and my secretary, then secretary of commerce and labor, now chairman of the republican national committee, have been in conspiracy to blackmail corporations, Mr. Cortelyou using his knowledge gained while he was secretary of commerce and labor to extort money from the corporations, and I, the president, having appointed him for this especial purpose. But there is not one particle of truth in the statement as regards anything that has gone on in the management of the republican campaign. Mr. Parker's accusations against Mr. Cortelyou and me are monstrous. The statements made by Mr. Parker are unqualifiedly and atrociously false."

ALITERARY bureau at Washington is sending out some really interesting letters to which The Commoner is reluctant to refer because they relate to Mr. Bryan personally, and seem to convey the impression that some effort will be necessary on the part of "patriotic democrats" to prevent Mr. Bryan from being nominated for the presidency in 1908. One of these letters appears in the Boston Evening Transcript of March 27, and for the information of Commoner readers some extracts from this letter are herein reproduced. For instance: "The anti-Bryan men will be busy during the summer and fall, and they hope to be able to sidetrack the Nebraskan before the party begins the work of reorganization in the various states next January. In due time emissaries are to be sent to the central states and to the trans-Mississippi states to talk over the situation with influential democrats. These men will be instructed

to use some such argument as this: 'We are not wedded to any particular candidate. All we are seeking to accomplish at this time is a reversal of the apparent tide in favor of the nomination of Bryan again. Can you find a democrat who believes Bryan can be elected? Then why tie ourselves to his fortunes again? With the republican party on the verge of a split over the question of centralizing all power in Washington, why shall we not make ready to wage a winning campaign? The democrats of the south do not want Bryan; the east does not want him. Do thoughtful democrats anywhere really want him? Then why sit still and have him foisted upon us? We merely suggest the names of Judge Gray and Judson Harmon. Any other 'safe and sane' candidate will suit us. First of all let us resolve not to renominate Bryan, and then let us see to it that the man nominated can command the support of thoughtful people everywhere, both democrats and republicans.' It is needless to say to Commoner readers that there is no danger of any man, whatever his aspirations or associations may be, of being 'foisted' upon the democratic party in 1908. Mr. Bryan will in due time announce his decision as to whether or not he will be a candidate. In the meantime, the readers of The Commoner are entitled to know what is going on.

CONGRESS recently raised the salary of the secretary to the president from \$5,000 to \$6,500 per year. A writer in the New York World says: "The late J. Addison Porter thought the term 'private secretary' incommensurate with the dignity of the job, and an obliging congress changed the title to 'secretary to the president' without increasing the salary. Mr. Loeb received whatever of added dignity Mr. Porter and Mr. Cortelyou had, and is now to enjoy that more tangible pleasure—an increase of 33 1/3 per cent in his compensation. When Salmon P. Chase was chief justice of the United States supreme court his salary was \$6,500. That is today the salary of the chief justice of the United States court of claims. It is \$500 more than the salaries of the judges of the district courts. There are eighteen rear admirals in the navy. Nine of these receive \$7,500 when on sea duty and \$6,375 on shore duty. The others receive \$5,500 on sea duty, \$4,675 on shore. The commandant of the marine corps and brigadier generals in the army are paid \$5,500. The pay of chief naval constructor is only \$5,500. Such are the rewards of technical training and faithful public service. Kentucky pays its governor \$6,500 a year. Indiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania pay more and all the other states less. Mr. Loeb undoubtedly has many duties that never before fell to the lot of a private secretary, and there are many who would say he earns whatever he can get, but the essential fact is that his office is one of increasing importance."

WRITING in The Public, Lewis F. Post says: "The newspapers that are reproducing the attacks upon municipal ownership which emanate from Wall street 'news' syndicates, would find it to the advantage of their readers, even if not themselves, to tell about the municipal gas and water works of Duluth. The latest official report of the water and light department of that 'city of the unsalted seas' shows that 'the earnings of the department from both gas and water have increased from \$271,105.28 in 1905, to \$304,456.83 in 1906,' while the expenses of operation, maintenance and interest have only increased from \$244,528.24 in 1905, to \$261,883.86 in 1906,' and that the net surplus for the year 1906 is \$47,572.97 as against \$26,577.04 for the preceding year. Meanwhile, there has been no change in rates for either gas or water. In comment the commissioner says: 'So far as the operation and maintenance of the gas and water systems are concerned, this board is confronted with very easy and simple problems. Both systems are money-making propositions, and notwithstanding the reductions in the price of both gas and water that have been made since the city acquired these plants, and notwithstanding the fact that during the last year the consumers of gas and water have had to pay the additional interest on the cost of the Duluth Heights and Park Point systems and the West Duluth reservoir, from which no income has been derived, the department is yet able to show an annual profit of \$47,572.97.'