

# CURRENT TOPICS

**A** CABLEGRAM FROM Paris under date of May 23, and carried by the Associated Press follows: "The condition of Theodore Tilton, the American editor and author who in 1874 brought suit against Henry Ward Beecher for \$100,000 damages, showed no improvement at a late hour tonight. Mr. Tilton has been sick only a few days, but his illness took a turn for the worse yesterday. In view of his age, seventy-two, the condition of Mr. Tilton is serious. He is suffering from pneumonia." Later dispatches announce Mr. Tilton's death.

**THE NEW YORK American** prints what it calls "the history of the Twentieth century in a nutshell" as follows: "List of illustrations: President Roosevelt on horseback (frontispiece). President Roosevelt in camp. President Roosevelt on his favorite hunter. President Roosevelt killing a cougar. President Roosevelt jumping a fence. President Roosevelt denouncing a mollicoddle. President Roosevelt at a cabinet meeting (tailpiece)."

**THE DISTINCTION** of being the oldest living veteran of the Mexican war in the United States is claimed by James M. Crutchfield, residing on the Warwick pike, three miles from Harrodsburg, Ky. The Paris correspondent to the Cincinnati Enquirer says: "'Uncle Jimmy' was born in Claiborne county, Tennessee, April 15, 1807, and is therefore over 100 years old. One brother enlisted at the same time he did in the Mexican war, and five other brothers served with him through the civil war. 'Uncle Jimmy' claims his mother lived to the age of 130, and at the time of her death did not have a gray hair in her head. Mr. Crutchfield is in the best of health, and every day or so walks from his home to Harrodsburg and return."

**REPRESENTATIVE DALZELL** of Pennsylvania is evidently not an enthusiastic Taft man. Speaking to a newspaper correspondent at New Orleans Mr. Dalzell said: "Personally, I am a strong admirer of our present chief executive but, like many others, I think he is going somewhat out of his proper sphere in attempting to name the republican nominee. I believe that his effort in this direction with regard to Taft is doing in the latter more harm than good. Should the president have supported the secretary of war in the proper manner, and not attempted to silence all persons who mentioned any one else for the place, his endorsement of Taft or any other aspirant for the place would no doubt be of great advantage to them. The president has simply overdone the thing."

**ASSEMBLYMAN VOSS** introduced in the New York assembly and at the instance of "Billy Madden," a bill which provides for the pensioning of aged citizens in preference to sending them to the almshouse. Referring to this measure the Brooklyn Eagle says: "The bill was prepared by Assemblyman Voss after hard work and study and is modeled quite closely upon the measures of like nature now operative in New Zealand, Australia and Sweden. The bill provides that the state shall pay a pension of \$12 per month to each citizen over the age of sixty years who is unable to support himself or herself, and who has complied with certain conditions precedent to the receiving of the pension. Applicants for pensions under the act must be able to prove that they have been residents of New York state for a period of twenty-five years prior to the making of the application. This provision is intended to prevent a rush of old people from other states to this. In addition to this provision, the applicant must be a citizen of the United States; must never have been convicted of crime and, in the case of a man, must never have deserted his wife or have failed to provide for children under the age of fourteen years. To win a pension it must also be shown that since his fiftieth year the applicant has been of good habits and sober. In addition it is provided that applicants must not dispossess themselves of property in order to enable themselves to qualify for pensions. The

state board of charities is to pass on all applicants and the law provides that any one making false statements in order to secure a pension shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. The bill has already won much support in both houses of the legislature, and it is believed that it will have many advocates when called up. Madden's idea in suggesting such a bill to Assemblyman Voss was that it would enable many old people who, under the present laws, must go into almshouses for the last years of their lives to remain with their relatives, who are otherwise too poor to support the aged ones, but who would be enabled to keep them should the state make such an allowance as the act calls for. A number of prominent Brooklynites favor the passage of the bill and believe that its enactment into law will do much to solve the old age problem which is becoming more and more urgent in state and nation."

**HALL CAINE**, the novelist, tell this story: "At a garden party near London where royalty attended Mr. Caine was presented to the king. A photographer made a snap shot of the assembly. As is well known, at these open air functions the male guests always remove their hats when in the presence of the king while his majesty continues to wear his headgear. When the photographic plate was developed it was found that beside the king only one other guest wore a hat. This was the very young son of the novelist, who was remonstrated with by his father for a grave breach of decorum. 'But,' asked the boy, 'isn't his majesty a polite man?—would he be guilty of a rude act?' 'He is a very polite man,' he was told, 'and he would not be guilty of a rude act.' 'Then,' triumphantly replied this young republican, 'I was as polite as he, for I only followed his example.'"

**SENATOR HOPKINS**, of Illinois, in a formal interview, presented Speaker Cannon's boom for the presidential nomination. He says that Mr. Cannon favors tariff revision, but objects "to having revision made a political football." "The revision of the tariff," said Mr. Hopkins, "is purely a business matter and must be regarded solely from a business and not at all from a political viewpoint. We can eliminate politics from the consideration of the revision bill by taking it up at a special session of congress immediately after the close of the next presidential campaign or in the spring of 1900. Were we to take up the problem at the coming long session of congress each item would be treated with regard to politics and not with regard to business. If we wait until after the next president is elected there will be little stirring in politics and the interests of the nation, as a whole, can best be cared for. It would not surprise me if Speaker Cannon should take up the issue of wise and safe legislation in making his campaign for the presidential nomination. Other issues have been suggested, but it would be hard to find one broader or more national in its character."

**THE NEW YORK PRESS**, the most outspoken republican newspaper, in protesting against corporation rule speaks right out in meeting on the Taft proposition. The Press says: "We are not at all in sympathy with the attempt to nominate for president Secretary Taft in Washington one year ahead of the republican national convention, and we have the gravest doubts of his ability to carry New York, with its thirty-nine electoral votes, and other states which are absolutely essential to the success of the party next year. But we have no hesitation in saying that it is to his very large credit that he refuses to sign the agreement by which it was arranged that the Foraker crowd should support Taft for president and the Taft party Foraker for re-election to the United States senate. In every state in the union there should be war without quarter on the Foraker type, which serves the corporations so faithfully and so ably that we have obtained from congress so far legislation against them that, compared with what Governor Hughes is achieving in New York, is only a mockery. There can be no genuine reform of the evil conditions and practices that

afflict our industrial and financial life until all the Forakers, whether in Ohio, Rhode Island, New Jersey or anywhere else, are dismissed in disgrace from the public service. We should be the last newspaper in the world to deny to Secretary Taft the credit that will be his if he does his share at this late day in the work of cleaning out the Forakers. Yet it is only fair to consider how little Mr. Taft has ever done to better in his own state conditions that have not been surpassed anywhere for corruption, scandal and infamy. He has held public office for many, many years, but until President Roosevelt decreed that his residuary legatee should be the secretary of war the Ohioan never felt called upon to fight in his own state the political iniquities of Foraker and Boss Cox. On the contrary, most of the years that he spent in public office were by gift and license of the Cox-Foraker machine. It is because the easy-going Tafts have so long endured Forakers, sharing office with them, that virtually nothing has been accomplished in a national way toward checking corporation abuses."

**IN THE OPINION** of the Press "President Roosevelt may be able to order delegates to nominate a candidate but he can not order the delivery of votes at the polls as he can the delivery of delegates in convention. And it is the vote of the American people that elects or defeats candidates running for president of the United States." The Press adds: "We believe that Secretary Taft would make a good president. We don't imagine that he would drive and fight for the cause of the people—in his own state of Ohio he never has done so—with the force and the grit of President Roosevelt. We don't think he would ever conduct the battle that Governor Hughes has conducted here in New York for the public. We don't think so because else why so late in beginning? We don't think his temperament in twenty years could achieve for the public what LaFollette achieved in his state of Wisconsin and in the United States congress in five. We have no doubt he could not equal the probable results that could be obtained from other men who have not waited a quarter of a century before beginning to fight for the public. Yet we think he would give an administration that would not be sensational for achievement but still would be well above the average. This, however, is not the question now. The question is not whether he would make a good president; it is no more that than whether President Roosevelt can deliver the delegates for him. It is whether he could carry New York, New Jersey and those other essential states. It is whether he could be elected. And it is a mighty serious question for the republican party."

**MR. ROOSEVELT** is now engaged in a spirited controversy with Rev. William J. Long, a Nature student. The Stamford, Conn., correspondent for the Chicago Tribune says: "The Rev. Dr. William J. Long today gave out an interview in reply to President Roosevelt's criticism of his nature books. He intimates the president is angry because he dared to criticize his method of slaughtering game promiscuously. He also says the president is taking up the cudgels in behalf of John Burroughs, the naturalist with whom Dr. Long carried on a bitter controversy a few years ago. Burroughs and President Roosevelt are close friends. Dr. Long says the Roosevelt article, which is headed 'Nature Fakers,' is itself a fake, that it is venomous and cowardly, and that its preparation showed the president's 'colossal vanity.' He says it's a pity that all animals won't act just as President Roosevelt prescribes, but it is a fact they don't. The president's article, he declares, judged on its merits apart from his high position, would have been thrown in the waste basket. 'I have no desire for a controversy with the president of the United States,' said Dr. Long. 'I have a profound respect for that office, which is not modified or changed in the least by any man occupying the office. The point is, that a man named Roosevelt has gone out of his way to make a violent attack upon me and my books. Ordinarily I ignore such attacks. If you read the article, even carelessly, you will see it is in a