

CURRENT TOPICS

MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE celebrated her eighty-eighth birthday May 26, at Boston. A Boston dispatch says: "Just to show her activity, Mrs. Howe entered the elevator at her home on Beacon street and ran the machine up and down three flights to accommodate a visitor. All day she was besieged with callers, and flowers and other tokens of good will came in wagon loads. 'I think,' she said to a reporter, 'that it is delightful the way the public maintains its interest in me.' Monday there will be a family reunion."

SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS have said that William Makepeace Thackeray named Washington "the city of magnificent distances." The New York World says: "This is incorrect. Thackeray may have used the phrase, but it originated with John A. Corwine, of Bellefontaine, Logan county, Ohio, who was a very famous personage in the forties and fifties. Once on a visit to the national capital he wound up a period of exhilarating experiences in the visitors' gallery of the house of representatives, and as the urgent body came to order Mr. Corwine felt impelled to rise in his place and make a few remarks. He began: 'I have been visiting this city of magnificent distances.' There was a lot more, but this sentence lived."

THE PHILADELPHIA Inquirer prints in its issue of May 16 this story from its Washington correspondent: "As things stand today, I am in favor of the nomination of Judge Gray, of Delaware, by the democratic national convention," said Henry Gassaway Davis, who was Parker's running mate on the democratic ticket in 1904. Senator Davis thinks that a great many conservative republicans would support the Delaware man. "Judge Gray," said Senator Davis, "is a strong, conservative and square man, who has the respect and confidence of the entire public. I am glad to see that a delegation of miners and laborers is to meet at Pottstown, Pa., on Saturday of this week for the purpose of endorsing Judge Gray. I am informed that other efforts are quietly being made in his behalf also. I am constantly surprised to learn how well thought of Judge Gray is by republicans. Only the other day a distinguished republican said to me: 'You fellows nominate Judge Gray for president and send the bill of costs to me,' and what is more, this man was able to pay the costs of nominating Judge Gray. This is a good indication of what some republicans think of Gray. That was a mighty good article that Senator Rayner wrote the other day about the political situation. Every one ought to read it, particularly what he says about Mr. Bryan being more of a menace to state rights than President Roosevelt or anybody else. That was a good article."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT delivered the Memorial day address at Indianapolis and in that address he dwelt at length upon corporations. He said that government regulation of railroads had come to stay; that wrongdoers must be brought to justice; that the government must have over the railroads the same power they now have over the national banks; that traffic agreements are proper when in the interest of the public and that railroad men must keep out of politics as railroad representatives. The St. Louis Globe-Democrat thus summarizes the president's Indianapolis speech: "Government must have full control over the railroads. There can be no swerving from the course the administration has mapped out. Railroads must be kept free from speculation. The movement to regulate railroads has come to stay. Wherever evildoers can be found they will be brought to justice, no matter how high or low. Railroads, as a whole, are sound. The physical value of each railroad must be determined. The railroad property of the country is worth as much as the securities representing it. Nothing must be done to injure the interests of the shareholders. In providing against overcapitalization we shall harm no man who is honest. I believe in proper publicity. The government must have access to the books of the roads. The means are at hand which will put the public in

possession of the facts. There must be just regulation of rates. Let the roads keep out of politics. Men of wealth are but trustees of the people. Positive restraint must be imposed on the railroads. The federal government is alone competent to exercise full supervision."

SPEAKING TO THE Washington correspondent for the New York World Secretary Taft said: "I am a tariff revisionist. No man can win the next election who does not favor changes in the tariff. I agree with the position taken by the American Manufacturers' association which recently declared in favor of a revision." Not long ago a representative of the American Protective Tariff League called upon Mr. Taft and told him that he could not expect any support from that organization unless he declared for the standpat policy. Mr. Taft declined to do so, saying that he believed the people would so strongly demand tariff revision that it would be disastrous to the party to fail to make definite promise.

FOLLOWING IS THE language used by Mr. Taft with reference to tariff revision: "Speaking my individual opinion and for no one else, I believe that since the passage of the Dingley bill there has been a change in the business conditions of the country making it wise and just to revise the schedules of the existing tariff. The sentiment in favor of a revision of the tariff is growing in the republican party, and in the near future the members of the party will doubtless be able to agree on a reasonable plan. But the work of the present session, which was pressing in its urgency, could never have been accomplished if there had been introduced into congress and the councils of the party the heated discussions certain to arise over the questions of the revision of the tariff. How soon the feeling in favor of revision shall crystallize into action can not be foretold, but it is certain to come, and with it those schedules of the tariff which have inequalities and are excessive will be readjusted. The reasonable prospect of a revision of the tariff by the republican party on conservative lines should certainly be greatly preferred by those who favor revision and yet believe in the protective system to legislation which is always threatened by the incoming of a democratic congress and a democratic administration under the battle-cry, 'A protective tariff is a robbery of the many for the benefit of the few,' and to the disaster to general business which inevitably follows."

REFERRING TO the Taft statement the Washington correspondent for the New York World says: "Secretary Taft is convinced that there is a strong sentiment throughout the country in favor of a revision of the tariff, and that this is especially strong on account of the increased cost of living, for which the tariff is largely responsible. Of course, this decision of Mr. Taft's is of superlative political importance. It probably lessens Taft's chances of securing the nomination. The tariff interests always have been the heart and core of the republican party organization, and his action sets in motion against him a machine which numbers its parts in every state in the union and which is particularly strong in its representation among republican politicians. With this issue drawn as it is now an anti-Taft and anti-revision element will begin its fight on the secretary of war."

SECRETARY TAFT, who is said to be Mr. Roosevelt's candidate for the presidency, delivered a speech on Memorial day at St. Louis. He devoted his time in pointing with pride to what the United States had done in Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines, and said that the people of those islands were grateful for this work. He said: "I have not touched upon and do not intend to discuss, for lack of time, what our future policy toward these three peoples must be. The problems to be presented are difficult and need a clear and calm judgment and a generous altruistic spirit for their satisfactory solution. Neither will be wanting, I am sure. Our experience in the three countries of Cuba, Porto

Rico and the Philippines has many points in common, and the chief common feature has been the desire on the part of the American people, represented by the American congress, and the American executive, to stimulate business, to elevate and educate the people, to maintain and preserve order, to introduce internal improvements of all sorts into the islands, to build roads and bridges and harbors, and gradually to enlarge as far as possible the control which the natives shall have over their own local government. There have been times when abuses have crept into the administration of the islands on the part of some of the civil and military servants of the United States, but the record of the nine years since the beginning of the Spanish war, looked at from an impartial standpoint is, on the whole, an unblemished record of generous, earnest effort to uplift these people, to help them on the way to self-government, and to teach them a higher and a better civilization. It is a record I confidently submit will always redound in the coming century to the high credit of the people of the United States as a generous civilizing nation charged by the accident of war with the responsibilities of guardianship of a less fortunate people and discharging that God-given responsibility in accordance with the highest ideals of the brotherhood of man."

THE SAN FRANCISCO grand jury has returned indictments against President Patrick Calhoun of the United Railroads, fourteen; against Assistant to the President Thornwall Mullaly, fourteen; against Attorneys Tiley L. Ford and W. M. Abbott of the legal department of the United Railroads, fourteen each; against Mayor Schmitz, sixteen; against Abraham Ruef, fourteen; against President Louis Glass of the Pacific States Telephone and Telegraph company, two; against Theodore V. Halsey, formerly an agent of that corporation, one. A San Francisco dispatch says: "Ruef, Schmitz, Calhoun, Mullaly, Ford and Abbott are charged with bribing fourteen supervisors to grant the overhead trolley franchise to the United Railroads. Schmitz is further charged with bribery in connection with the fixing of the gas company's rate and with receiving \$50,000 in the United Railroads' franchise deal. The indictments against Glass are additional to the eleven indictments already returned against him on the charge of bribing supervisors to refuse a competitive telephone franchise. The indictment against Halsey is for the same offense."

IN ITS REPORT of Omaha's celebration of Memorial day, the World Herald prints this pretty story: "You decorate the graves of your soldier boys with beautiful flowers, but the grave of my boy can never be decorated. For he lies buried deep beneath the ocean waves and his grave must ever remain without flowers." This was the cry of an anguished mother in Beatrice, Neb., a few years since, when she was present at the decorating of the soldiers' graves on Memorial day at that place. In June, 1898, one year before, her son, George Geddes, had died at sea while with company C, First Nebraska, of which he was sergeant, and had been buried with honors, the first American soldier of the Spanish-American war to be buried at sea. He was on his way to Manila and the burial occurred between San Francisco and Honolulu. By the weeping mother stood another mother whose son had been in the same company. This was Mrs. C. M. Peters, now president of the Garfield circle of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. Her heart swelled with sympathy for the mother who could not have even the comfort of weeping over her son's grave. Her thoughts busily planned as she watched the beautiful flowers laid on the graves of the fallen heroes. The next year her plans bore fruit. Before Memorial day an immense box of flowers went from Nebraska to be scattered over the waves of the Pacific ocean in honor of George Geddes, who was buried at sea. Express companies heard of the intention of the loyal Nebraska women and vied with one another to carry the box. It was arranged that three express companies should have this honor and the flowers were gladly carried to the coast by three different companies, relaying at differ-