

# CURRENT TOPICS

REMINDER OF a one time interesting character in American history is given in a Washington dispatch to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat as follows: "Lieutenant Colonel Elijah W. Halford, pay department United States army, was retired today, having reached the statutory age of sixty-four years. Colonel Halford is at present attached to headquarters of the department of California at San Francisco. Colonel Halford is one of the most widely known officers in the pay corps of the army, the natural sequence of his service for four years in the city of Washington as private secretary to the late President Harrison, from 1889 to 1893. At an early age Elijah Halford entered journalism, which was the single pursuit of his life up to the moment when President Harrison induced him to relinquish an editorial desk to become his private secretary (the office of secretary to the president had not then been created). As private secretary Mr. Halford was a tower of strength to President Harrison in the stormy days of his administration, and the president evinced his appreciation and gratitude by appointing Mr. Halford a major in the pay corps of the army January 10, 1893. His service since that date has been worldwide."

GEORGE H. LOCEY, of Southern Pines, N. C., writes to the New York World as follows: "In your issue of June 28 you developed a democratic platform which was both comprehensive and satisfactory to the party of the nation—so far as the matter has yet been discussed. The democratic party, in its organization and temperament, desires to be just. In the last presidential contest Judge Parker openly and truthfully charged the republican party with receiving and using many millions of money from the wealthy corporate interests to promote the election of the candidates of the republican party. With great vituperation the charge was denied and the denial reiterated. But subsequent events have proved that the charge was true—so offensively true that feeble steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence. It will be repeated, but more carefully concealed. Judge Parker is an able man, an honest man and a democrat whose character is unsullied by any act of perfidy. His life is an open book. Simple justice demands that the democratic national convention of 1908 should renominate Judge Parker by acclamation, and with recent events fresh in the minds of the people his election is assured."

THOSE WHO have frequently met defeat in politics will be interested in this good story told by a writer in Young's Magazine: "Even self-confidence will get bumped," reflected Adele Ritchie, the bright particular star in 'Fascinating Flora.' Whereby hangs a story. A man came shooting from a brightly lighted window one night, and landed with a crash on the sidewalk. 'It's all right,' he said to the crowd that had gathered, as he stiffly rose. 'That's my club, the Eighth precinct. I'm a Smith man, and there's ten Jones men in there. I'm going back to them. You stay here and count them as they come out of that window.' He limped back into the club. There was a great uproar. Then a figure crashed through the window, and struck the sidewalk with a grunt. 'That's one,' said the crowd. 'No,' said the figure, rising. 'Don't start counting yet. It's me again.'"

SENATOR LAFOLLETTE, of Wisconsin, had an interesting time recently at a teachers' institute at Pittsburg. A Pittsburg newspaper dispatch says: "Senator LaFollette was engaged to deliver an address to the teachers on 'Representative Government.' Before the speech County Superintendent Samuel Hamilton told the senator he could not discuss partisan politics. In opening his speech LaFollette said: 'I have been warned not to be partisan in my speech here this afternoon, but I want to say to the superintendent and the county officials just what I think'—Mr. Hamilton here arose and told Senator LaFollette that the institute was no place for partisan politics, and that he would have to confine himself to a general di-

course. For about an hour the senator talked, and then he began to tell the teachers about how the Pennsylvania senators had voted on his amendments to the railroad rate bill. The superintendent was on his feet in an instant, and declared that the senator must cease. 'Go ahead!' came cries from all over the house. After order had been restored, Senator LaFollette informed the audience that he would have to comply with the wishes of the superintendent, but if there was any persons present who wished to hear what he had to say, he was willing to talk. The audience of 1,500 persons left the hall, followed by Mr. LaFollette, who took up his position on the steps of the Carnegie Music hall, where the institute was being held. There for two hours, until almost 7 o'clock, the senator talked as he pleased, amid shouts of approval from the audience. The officials of the institute are indignant."

REFERRING TO the effort to suppress Senator LaFollette, the Pittsburg Leader says: "Before he began his speech to the teachers LaFollette was warned by the county superintendent of schools that 'partisanship' must not enter into his discussion of 'Representative Government.' By that it was meant that LaFollette should not attack the 'unrepresentative government' against which he is a living protest in the United States senate. The senator from Wisconsin very properly made answer to this that he intended to speak as he believed to be right whether his remarks were called 'partisan' or not; that he placed his country and its welfare above his party or any party. And he spoke his mind freely until he was peremptorily ordered to stop. The protests against this from the teachers were much to the credit of themselves. When the senator was finally forced to leave the hall to finish his address in the open air the teachers plainly showed where their sympathies lay and they administered a stinging rebuke to the man who would deny them the opportunity of hearing the truth by following LaFollette in a body and remaining out doors for the conclusion of his address. The secret of this attempt to choke off LaFollette may be found in that part of his speech in which he told facts concerning Pennsylvania's misrepresentation in the United States senate and in which he showed the teachers how that body represents not the people nor their states, but the trusts and other aggregations of wealth. Politicians who serve these special interests would keep the truth about this out of the school rooms if they could. The country is learning too well of the evil they have wrought and they seek to distort, suppress and strangle the truth whenever and wherever they can. The school teachers of Allegheny county have proved themselves to be worthy of the positions they hold. They refused to submit to the narrow prejudice of party politics or to allow it to stand between them and the truth and they displayed the true American spirit in standing up as they did for free speech."

GEORGE B. CORTELYOU, secretary of the treasury, has been asked by the New York World to answer these questions: 1. As secretary to President McKinley did you have knowledge of the campaign fund collected by Senator Hanna in 1900, the names of many heavy contributors, the promises made and the methods of distribution? 2. What corporations were investigated in whole or in part while you were secretary of commerce? 3. Did any of these corporations contribute to the republican campaign fund in 1904? Did you or Mr. Bliss or any authorized agent of the national committee solicit contributions from them? 4. Did you as postmaster general enter into mail contracts with any railroad which contributed to the republican campaign of 1904? If so, what companies? 5. As secretary of the treasury have you awarded government deposits of money or granted any other official favors to any national banks which contributed to the republican campaign fund of 1904? If so, what banks? 6. Have treasury favors been solicited by or granted to any financial or commercial interests which contributed to this fund? If so, what? 7. Did

Treasurer Bliss, of the republican national committee, promise, either directly or indirectly, any favors in return for contributions? 8. Has Mr. Bliss solicited any favors of the treasury in behalf of banks or corporations? 9. What answer have you, as postmaster general and secretary of the treasury, given to contributors making demands for what they understood would be their recompense? 10. Was return made of contributions discovered afterward to have been made in expectation of favors? 11. Why was the Standard Oil company's contribution retained after President Roosevelt ordered it returned? 12. Did you know the contributors to the \$260,000 Harriman fund and the practical uses to which money was to be put to insure New York going republican?"

A WORLD reporter called upon Mr. Cortelyou and presented this list of questions. Mr. Cortelyou read the questions and the following dialogue took place between Mr. Cortelyou and the World correspondent: "I have nothing to say." "Why?" "Because the time for me to speak has not arrived." "When do you expect to break your silence?" "It may not be long before I shall have something to say. I could answer every one of those questions now, completely and convincingly, but I shall not do so." "It has been said, Mr. Cortelyou, that by your silence you are receiving the criticism which should be levelled at others." "That may be, but I can stand it for a while longer. I am conscious of my own integrity in this matter. Let me repeat what I said in the first place, that I have absolutely nothing to say, no answer to make to any questions concerning campaign contributions. If you desire to publish anything from me, please say that and nothing more."

AS THOUGH Mr. Cortelyou did not have enough trouble on his hands Congressman Hepburn (republican) of Iowa takes a poke at him. Returning from Europe, Mr. Hepburn speaking to a newspaper reporter condemned the treasury practice of putting money into the banks to prevent alleged money stringencies. He said this money went to aid New York speculators, and it was nonsense to talk about the west needing money to move crops. "There is no longer a crop moving period in the west," said he. "There used to be before farmers were so prosperous. Now crops are moved all the year round." He declared Mr. Cortelyou ought to know better than that the money he deposited went to move crops, and said New York always owed big sums to the west. The New York stock exchange could be wiped out with benefit to the country.

THE FIRST thing Tom L. Johnson did after being nominated for mayor was to issue a challenge to his opponent, Congressman Burton for a joint debate. The Cincinnati Enquirer says: "The republican candidate for mayor side-stepped the challenge, declaring that future events might decide him to take up the dare, but that at present he had nothing to say. Mayor Johnson, in accepting his nomination at the convention, declared the issues between himself and Congressman Burton to be as follows: 'I do not look upon your unanimous choice of me for the office of mayor of this city for the fourth time as a personal tribute. It is rather an expression of your belief and enthusiasm for ideas which we hold in common. Our platform is too broad for mere partisanship. For seven years we have been carrying forward a movement that is bigger than any party, bigger than any city. It is but part of a movement which is nation-wide, and which is seeking to make government serve the people rather than serve privileged wealth. Cleveland has attracted the attention of other cities because it has gone further and moved faster toward the solution of its problems. In Cleveland the question is this: 'Shall we have a monopoly-owned city, or shall we have a city-owned monopoly?' for that is the question which underlies all others. Cleveland is not fighting for three-cent fare alone. Cleveland is fighting to be free. Cleveland is fighting for self-government. Whether he sees