

CURRENT TOPICS

IN SIX STATE elections next month governors are to be chosen in Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey and Rhode Island. New York will choose a legislature and two supreme judges. This legislature will elect Senator Platt's successor. General attention is attracted to the municipal campaign in Cleveland, Ohio, where the fight for mayor is between Tom L. Johnson and Congressman Burton, the latter being strongly backed by the Roosevelt and Taft forces.

SENATOR HOPKINS recently made public a letter in which Mr. Roosevelt complimented the senator because of his vote in favor of Reed Smoot of Idaho, and now, according to the Cincinnati Enquirer, Senator Smoot returns favor for favor in this way: "There is no getting around the fact that the people of the state of Utah are heartily in favor of the renomination of President Roosevelt. They admire his type of man, and he has been their hero for a long time. They believe in him and his policies. If he should consent to become a candidate he would undoubtedly be given the delegation from the state in the next republication national convention."

BISHOP TUTTLE says that he was misquoted in the newspaper interview recently attributed to him. Writing from Richmond, Va., to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat the bishop says: "My attention has just been called to an editorial in your issue of September 28, concerning the report of an alleged interview with me at Cleveland, Ohio, some days since. I knew of this report in other papers, but decided to say nothing. But I so much value the respect and confidence of my own people of St. Louis and Missouri that I do not feel willing to rest under the imputation of such unwisdom as the report seems to fasten upon me. The interviewer put down what I did not say. I said: 'Public clamor is not public opinion. Just now, the former, to an exaggerated and unreasonable degree, is dominating the public press. To secure the latter, which really governs America, we must wait for the sober, second thought of the American people, which, I am convinced, means, in the long run and in the main, to do justly.' I did not use such a term as 'this runaway administration.' I did not mention the name of Mr. Rockefeller. I made no reference whatever to the president or to the federal government or to the administration."

THE PROFITS of the Standard Oil trust in twenty-five years have been over \$800,000,000 and the dividends declared in that period have been more than \$550,000,000. At no time since the organization of the trust in Ohio, in 1882, have John D. Rockefeller's holdings been less than twenty-six per cent. The same men who controlled the great organization twenty-five years ago are in control today. The period of liquidation between 1892 and 1899 found these same men in control. They evaded the mandate of the supreme court of Ohio and, instead of dissolving the trust, cemented the constituent companies even more firmly than before.

PPOINTING OUT that the above facts and figures were established in the government's suit at New York the New York World says: "The missing ledger and transfer books of the trustees in liquidation have not been secured, but, from a journal and other records unearthed from a vault at No. 26 Broadway, Messrs. Kellogg and Morrison, the government's counsel, obtained figures and entries, copies of which were sworn to on the witness stand by Clarence G. Fay, assistant comptroller. The sham 'liquidation' of 1892-99 was thoroughly exposed by statements taken from the books of the original trustees. These showed that on March 21, 1892, the trustees pretended to liquidate the trust by a division of all the stocks of the constituent companies, pro rata. On April 1, of the same year, before any division of the stocks in the hands of the trustees was made, they turned

over to the Standard Oil company of New Jersey, to the Standard Oil company of New York and to various other companies the stocks of sixty-four subsidiary concerns, leaving just twenty-companies in the hands of the trustees. The stocks of these twenty companies they divided into parts equal to the number of trust certificates outstanding, \$7,250. On November 30 and December 31, 1902, a bare majority of the certificates, to the par value of \$49,461,900 were cancelled and a proportionate amount of the stocks of the twenty companies distributed to the persons who surrendered the trust certificates."

THE ONLY parties who participated in this distribution were the nine trustees themselves and a few of their immediate associates. The list as shown by the books is as follows: John D. Rockefeller, William Rockefeller, Henry M. Flagler, Benjamin Brewster, John D. Archbold, Henry H. Rogers, Wesley Hunt Tilford, Charles W. Harkness, Oliver B., Esther J., Walter J., Ellen G., Oliver G. and Anna B. Jennings; Emma B. Auchincloss, O. H. Payne and the estate of Charles Pratt. The balance of the stock of all the companies, which belonged to the public, was retained by the trustees. They controlled the corporation, therefore, in exactly the same manner as before.

IN AN INTERVIEW at Omaha, Patrick Cudahy stated, among other things relative to the present conditions of the meat trade, that meat is unusually high in price, but the reason for it is that "everybody wants the choicest cut, and there are not enough of these to supply the demand." Referring to Mr. Cudahy's statement the Fort Worth (Texas) Record makes this comment: "Accepting his explanation that the people only want the best cuts of meat and that the supply of these is not sufficient for the demand, and therefore the high price, it must follow that there is an over-supply of the inferior cuts because of the refusal of the people to buy them. Under all of the laws of supply and demand it should follow that these inferior cuts should be offered at a much lower price than they are quoted at present. This, however, is not the case. The fine old economic law concerning supply and demand that has been laid down for these many years ought to apply in the latter case if it is a wholesome law as applied to the former case. It is to be regretted that Mr. Cudahy closed his interview before he had given his explanation for the continued high prices of the inferior cuts of meat."

THIS DISPATCH from Memphis, Tenn., appeared in the Cincinnati Enquirer: "Angered because the pilot of the steamer Fred Hartwig, carrying the Pittsburg delegation to the waterways convention, was constantly playing for position in the flotilla, President Roosevelt wired United States Inspector of Hulls Williams, in Evansville, Ind., today, ordering him to cancel the license of the master of the Hartwig by wire. The president's telegram read: 'To Supervising Inspector of Vessels, Evansville, Ind.: I direct that the license of the master, or whoever is responsible for the 'Fred Hartwig' during the present voyage, be suspended at once for ninety days. I wish this done by telegraph, wherever the boat may be, if such procedure is possible. Colonel Sears can give you the details of the misconduct, which has been of a serious nature and might have at any time caused an accident to the Mississippi as well as to other boats. The action of the master of that boat might have cost my life at any time.'"

REFERRING TO the dismissal of this pilot the Pittsburg Dispatch says: "The telegram from President Roosevelt 'directing' the immediate suspension of the master of the steamer Fred Hartwig for ninety days, and that it shall be done at once by telegraph, is an example of the impulsive outbursts that make his judicious friends grieve and give his enemies abundant ammunition for representing him as

an imperious exponent of personal and arbitrary government. While the reports of the actual occurrence that led to this telegraphic edict are rather hazy it may be conceded as probable that something wrong was done. Let us suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the case is one fully demanding the imposition of the penalty which the president prescribes. Taking that to be the case it must be recognized that the law has provided a course of action. The proper officers have the power to penalize reckless and improper acts upon investigation. But that very requirement of investigation precludes the idea of the penalty being assessed according to telegraphic order by the chief executive. Further than that, if the theory of administrative officers in charge of any regulation could include the power of the president to assume their duties and act as prosecutor, judge and jury, by ordering both finding and penalty, it would afford the most convincing argument against any such system of regulation. President Roosevelt's sincerity, virility and honesty of purpose have given him a hold on the public affection which few men have rivaled during their lifetime. Everyone knows that his good qualities have received full appreciation in these columns. But this high tide of public favor affords only the stronger reason why he should be on his guard against hasty steps which give color to the charge of substituting personal and arbitrary power for constitutional and judicial proceedings."

AT LAST a "good trust" has been discovered. It is the tobacco trust and in its answer to the government suit this trust freely admits its goodness. A writer in the New York World tells the story in this way: "For instance, the tobacco trust, instead of stifling competition, has maintained it among the companies which it controls. It never compels the consumer to use a brand that he refuses to buy. In closing down small plants it did not aim at suppressing its former rivals' products, for it continued to turn them out in its own factories. It does not possess a monopoly, because some of the tobacco trust's rivals have survived in the face of its severe competition. It has not conspired to lower the price of leaf tobacco to the planter, because the planter, if he does not get his price, can grow other crops. It only took over the retail business when another corporation came to it for financial aid. Altogether the tobacco trust on its own showing, is a beneficent institution seeking to do all the business it can according to the most profitable methods it can discover and in spite of the efforts of smaller competitors."

AN OWENSBORO, Ky., dispatch says that with McLean county going dry in a local option election by a majority of 1,055 only nineteen of the 119 counties in Kentucky remain "wet." On this line a Washington dispatch to the New York World will be interesting. That dispatch follows: "A dry Washington looms before the helpless people of the capitol. The prohibitionists of the country are girding up their loins for an assault on congress at the forthcoming session, to compel it to enact a statute forbidding the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors in the District of Columbia. The girding has been going on for a long time, but the people of Washington have only become aware of the fact within the last ten days. When they first heard about it, they just smiled. Ridiculous, they thought. Further thought brought the anxious corrugated brow. It was easy to remember that congress, when the issue was forced right up against it, had abolished the canteen and had driven the saloons out of the capitol. The lawmakers had no desire to do either. The prohibitionists, however, waved the big stick and the congressmen meekly obeyed. A prohibition bill would have been reported from the committee on alcoholic liquor traffic last winter, but for the firmness of Speaker Cannon, who also swung the big stick and intimidated the members of that committee. But now the prohibition folks have things in such shape that the speaker can not hope to