

CURRENT TOPICS

REFERRING TO Mr. Taft's railroad bill, the Des Moines (Iowa) Register and Leader, republican, says: "No intelligent person can read the bill and not know it was drawn for the purpose of deceiving somebody. There is scarcely a frank or straightforward provision in it. * * * The president's indorsement of the bill has given color to the suspicion that he turned the whole matter over to others. It is wholly inconsistent with his reputation as a lawyer that he should have known what the bill contained. * * * Never was a bill so completely riddled as Senator Cummins riddled this one. Never were such patent attempts to deceive exposed in a measure having high indorsement. Senator LaFollette simply tells the truth about it. No man can confess to having had anything to do with the drafting of this bill, who is not willing to accept the responsibility of having attempted to deceive congress and the people."

AT THE SPECIAL election in the Thirty-second (Rochester) congressional district of New York, held on April 19, J. S. Havens, democrat, was elected over George W. Aldridge, republican, by a plurality of 5,831. At the regular election in 1908 James B. Perkins, republican, was elected by a plurality of 10,167. Not only did Havens carry the city of Rochester, but he carried every one of the country towns save one. The issue in the country towns was the "high cost of living," and the farmers evidently accepted it as the vital issue and voted accordingly. Rochester, a city noted for its manufacturing industries, especially clothing, seemingly took the new tariff, and especially the wool schedule, as the paramount issue. There are more clothing factories in Rochester than in any other city in the United States, and the result of the election clearly shows that the clothing industry looks upon the wool schedule as unfair. The republican managers flooded the district with copies of President Taft's defense and endorsement of the law, especially the wool schedule, as wholly meeting the republican pledge, and owners of business establishments were warned that the election of Aldridge would mean that the countrywide demand for re-opening the tariff question would be emphasized instead of checked. Despite all these efforts a republican plurality of 10,000 in 1908 was changed to a democratic plurality of 5,000 in 1910.

IN THE RECENT insurance graft investigations in New York it was shown that Aldridge had accepted a check for \$1,000 for using his influence in securing the passage of a certain insurance bill. Democratic leaders insist that this had no particular influence on the result, the fight being waged solely on the tariff issue. The executive council of the American Federation of Labor endorsed Havens, and the republican leaders admit that this had an appreciable effect.

THE SPECIAL election in the Thirty-second New York district is the third special congressional election since the enactment of the Payne-Aldrich-Cannon tariff law. The death of Congressman DeArmond, democrat, necessitated a special election in the Sixth Missouri district. The election was held on February 1, 1910, and C. C. Dickinson, democrat, was elected by a plurality of 3,788. DeArmond's plurality at the 1908 election was 1,199. On March 22 a special election was held in the Fourteenth Massachusetts district, which elected a republican in 1908 by a plurality of 14,250. At the special election Foss, democrat, was elected by a plurality of 5,650.

HAVENS' VICTORY was made the subject of editorial comment in the leading New York papers the following day. The Times says the democratic victory is more than a revolt against impure state politics, adding: "The people do not at all agree with the president when he says the Payne-Aldrich tariff is a 'good tariff.' They have been unable to agree with his complacent view of the works of the old leaders at Washington, of that stalwart republican organization

just now falling to pieces through the overthrow of Cannon and the announced retirement of Aldrich and Hale." The Morning World says: "The tariff issue, used with such telling effect by Mr. Foss in Massachusetts, undoubtedly contributed to the result. Rochester does not differ from Boston or Kansas City in resenting broken pledges of the republican party in Washington." The Press declares Havens' election was a "splendid democratic victory," due to unclear state and national politics, and not to the tariff. Hearst's American says: "The ultimate portent of the event at Rochester is that the spirit of political independence is abroad in the land, sweeping away the debris of old political machines, cancelling the nominations of disgraceful candidates and preparing the way for a new politics of honesty, openness and efficiency." The Tribune says the result rested entirely upon the moral issues at stake and that public sentiment forced the defeat of Aldridge.

SAN JUAN, Porto Rico dispatch to the Philadelphia Ledger says: "William J. Bryan has returned here after a tour of the principal towns. He expressed much surprise over the resources and the progress of the island and the scenery. At Hatillo yesterday Mr. Bryan laid the corner stone of the Boys' Industrial Institute building, which is to be erected by the Methodist Mission. The institute will include a Bryan school of citizenship. The municipality of Hatillo has named a street after the distinguished Nebraskan. Mr. Bryan made a stirring address at Ponce Thursday night, in which he warmly approved the course of the United States toward the island of Porto Rico. Upon his arrival Mr. Bryan announced to the political leaders who called upon him to solicit his assistance in opposing the Olmsted Porto Rican bill that he was ready to listen, but would not talk politics in Porto Rico. Thursday night he was dined in Ponce by the political element. In speeches that followed the ultra-radicals violently attacked the United States and the local government on the theory that Porto Rico was being tyrannized. Mr. Bryan listened to such speeches and interrupted the third, replying with a patriotic and spirited address in which he indorsed the attitude of the United States toward the island and the American administration therein. Later he addressed another large audience in the Ponce theatre in which he gave forceful expression to the same sentiments, after which he was congratulated by some of the radical leaders."

AS FREELY predicted, a newspaper correspondent says the United States supreme court will, on account of Justice Brewer's death, hear re-argument in the Standard Oil and tobacco trust cases. President Taft will appoint Justice Brewer's successor who will sit in these cases when they are re-argued. A Washington dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald says: "No decision in either of these cases, upon which so much has depended industrially, politically and with respect to administration activities in other anti-trust proceedings, now can be had until early next winter. The fall elections will have passed before the highest tribunal renders an opinion, for the existing conditions preclude the second argument ordered until the court meets for the final term next October. A veritable sensation was sprung by the court when, immediately after convening today, the chief justice, in the most matter-of-fact way, re-assigned the cases for argument. The news, flashed to New York, began to affect the stock market almost before the assembled lawyers had time to analyze the meaning of the order. In Washington the acute interest speedily centered on the effect the new situation would have in determining the personality of the late Justice Brewer's successor and upon the influence which delay in deciding the 'trust-busting' suits inaugurated by the administration might have upon the political campaign soon to open. There are two views regarding the influence of the postponement of the decisions upon the country. Ultra conservatives, notably some of the eastern senators, think the delay will be a good thing, inasmuch as it may give reviving industry a

chance to establish itself permanently without further immediate worry as to how corporation affairs are to be disturbed. A more widely held view, however—the one that finds lodgment with many government officials and with the majority of practical politicians—is that fate has added to the complications confronting the republican party in the contest now before it."

POLITICS IN Tennessee is somewhat mixed. An Associated Press dispatch from Nashville says: "Whatever will be the results politically in Tennessee in the supreme court decisions in the Cooper case and the pardon of Colonel Cooper by Governor Patterson, opinion seems general that the old factional lines, Patterson and anti-Patterson, the latter representing the prohibition or statewide element of the state democracy are unchanged. In fact they are more taut if that be possible. The governor's friends claim that his action has served to cement more closely than ever his following, that it has given them a rallying cry to battle. On the other hand it has embittered to an even more intense degree the hostility to him on the part of his political enemies. Carmack was the leader and idol of the statewider. His friends, charging that his killing was the outcome of a political scheme, made it the chief issue in a bitter war that has since been relentlessly waged against Patterson, and the Cooper case has colored the entire political atmosphere of Tennessee. A governor and state judiciary are soon to be elected. The state democratic committee dominated by Patterson men recently called a blanket primary for June 4 to make nominations. Enemies of Patterson freely charged the inclusion of the judiciary as an attempt to wield a club over the supreme court which had the Cooper case under advisement and every member of which was an aspirant for re-election. Matters were complicated by the refusal of Chief Justice Beard and Justices Shields and Neill to enter the primary. They will run independently, and now that their attitude on the celebrated case is known, the question is, what will the alignment be? It is most complex if the attitude of individual members of the court are to be taken into the analysis. Meanwhile Patterson, serving his second term as governor, has not said if he will be an aspirant for a third term. Many of his friends are consistently urging him to be, while equally strong pressure is being used to induce him to run for United States senator to succeed James B. Frazier. Incidentally, Mr. Frazier, a candidate to succeed himself, has refused to enter the June primary.

The statewide faction is well organized and prepared to fight Patterson wherever he lands, but they have not put forward a name to be used in connection with the gubernatorial race. The campaign, when it opens, is expected to be furious."

THE INCOME TAX law of South Carolina has been held to be constitutional by the supreme court of that state. The Columbia (S. C.) State says: "The opinion holds that the act does not violate either the constitution of this state or the fourteenth amendment of the constitution of the United States. The provision of the fourteenth amendment, which it was alleged that the income tax law violated, reads as follows: 'No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of the citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.' Section five of article one of the constitution of South Carolina is to the same effect and in nearly the same words. The decision in ruling on this point is to the effect that under the provisions of the income tax law there is no taking of property without due process of law and no denial of the equal protection of the law. It was alleged by Mr. Alderman that the income tax law was unconstitutional in that it denied to him the equal protection of the laws and due process of law in that: 1. Incomes under \$2,500 are not taxed and incomes over said amount are taxed, this being an arbitrary and unreasonable class-