

# CURRENT TOPICS

HERE IS A chance for President Taft to make good his words. The New York World says: "It is a fair challenge that Champ Clark, the democratic leader of the house, flings at Mr. Taft. The president has admitted in his speeches that the tariff on woolen goods should be reduced. Very well, says the leader of the minority; send a special message to congress demanding a reduction in the woolen schedule, and if Chairman Payne will report the bill the democrats will offer no amendments. That is a fair proposition. It disposes of the plea that the excesses of the Payne-Aldrich bill can not be corrected without opening up the whole question of tariff revision again. The woolen schedule which Mr. Taft himself refuses to defend can be revised downward without touching another rate in the tariff act. If Mr. Taft is wise he will accept Mr. Clark's challenge and help give the American people cheaper clothing at once."

REPRESENTATIVE Fowler of New Jersey in a public statement made with respect to United States Senator Kean of that state gives a sample of the kind of "harmony" in the republican party. Referring to Senator Kean, Mr. Fowler said: "Of all the subservient, truculent, literal 'me-too's' and perfect cuckoos, of all the political poodle dogs that Senator Aldrich prized most highly, undoubtedly Senator Kean wears the blue ribbon. He never gets off the Aldrich reservation, right or wrong, and on the tariff bill gave 128 votes out of 129 to Mr. Aldrich, if my recollection is correct, rebelling only to insist that polo ponies should go on the free list. The point I want to press upon the public mind is that if the republicans of the Fifth congressional district want to vote for Joseph G. Cannon and help Voorhees and Kean in the execution of their corrupt bargain, and if the republicans of the state of New Jersey want to vote for 'Aldrichism' in a pure and unadulterated form, they should elect Senator Kean to succeed himself by all means. But Senator Kean will not succeed himself if the people of the state have anything to say about it. However, under the old practice by which the candidate for the United States senate has been furnishing the election expenses to the candidates for the assembly and senate of the state, he would undoubtedly have a good chance to find his way in again. But are the people going to continue this rotten, corrupt, polluting policy when it is in their power to save the good name of the state from the degradation of being called a 'rotten borough' and a 'cesspool of political corruption'?" After declaring that candidates for the United States senate in Jersey sometimes have paid the campaign expenses of successful candidates for the state legislature after their election, he says: "If Senator Kean should lock up his political check book until after the election in November, lock it up even now, and his brother, Hamilton F. Kean, should lock up his political check book too, even now, and Senator Kean should content himself with going about the state and trying to tell the people why he should be returned to the senate, is there one single person in the whole state who honestly believes that Senator Kean would be re-elected?"

WASHINGTON dispatches of recent date told a sad story. The following is from a correspondent for the Louisville Ky., Courier-Journal: "There is a sad lesson and an equally sad moral in the statement today that on yesterday fully 200 of the fatal blue envelopes were distributed among the treasury employees noting that their services would no longer be required after June 30, the close of the fiscal year. This means, of course, their dismissal from employment, and that means food and raiment for from 1,500 to 2,000 people. Nearly 90 per cent of the discharged are old men and women who have been in the government service for many years, some of them for a generation. Nearly all of these have lived up to their incomes and they go out into the world hopeless and poverty-stricken and helpless to secure other employment. It is a sympathetic, if not a pathetic, situation, and yet there is no help

for it. The trouble is that all government employes have a conviction that they being under the civil service rules will hold their places as long as they live and they take no thought of tomorrow and live for today. They never think of a rainy day and very few of them save up a dollar for their old age. Then the shock comes and finds them penniless and heartbroken and their loved ones crying for bread. There can not be anything more distressing and at the same time there can not be a better warning, for it should teach those who remain to economize and make an effort to save up something for the future. At best these government positions are the most uncertain of all others. At first they are fine and promising, but in the end in most cases, especially with women, they bring not only other disappointments, but sorrow. It is a thousand times better for a young woman to marry a trustworthy young man, no matter how humble in life he may be, than to get a government clerkship, and it is far much better for her to enter into any respectable service to make an honest living than in the government service. It is said that a majority of the unfortunates are from the southern states. If this report is true it is not easy to understand, as the south has only three-tenths of the employes of the government here in Washington and elsewhere in the country."

HORATIO SEYMOUR was born May 31, 1810. He was the democratic nominee for the presidency in 1868. A writer in the Buffalo Times says: "It was the lot of Mr. Seymour to be the foremost political figure of the state of New York in the most momentous crisis this country has seen since the revolution, and to be one of the chief representative democrats of the nation during a period when the democratic party was exposed to worse vilification, slander and misunderstanding than at any other time in American history. No war governor of the state of New York could have escaped the barbed shafts of bitter censure and the darts aimed at Horatio Seymour were dipped in venom doubly distilled, simply because he was a democrat. During different phases of the crisis in which he held the executive helm he was probably the most abused man in the state. His motives were misinterpreted, his actions traduced and the intense injustice of the time continued to follow Mr. Seymour long after the civil war, and almost up to the day of his death, in 1886. But though a living generation may be unjust, posterity very seldom is, and one of the interesting developments of a semi-political, semi-historical kind in the last two decades has been the steady rehabilitation of the fame of Horatio Seymour—not with the democracy, for the democracy was always faithful to him—but with the successors and survivors of those who had been his harshest political opponents. By a deliberate but sure process, the clouds of detraction cleared away, and the state of New York, irrespective of party, recognized that in Seymour it had possessed one of its greatest men. That the democracy realized this all along ranks with the crowning proofs of the sound estimate placed on men by the party of Jefferson. As war governor, Seymour, with marvelous statesmanship, preserved a correct adjustment between the national duty of upholding Lincoln in his efforts to put down the rebellion, and the party duty of maintenance of democratic principles and of making war measures consonant with the constitution. Five times Seymour was the democratic candidate for governor of New York, and he served two terms in that office. Nominated for president in 1868, the commanding qualities and the prodigious personal popularity of the man received an astonishing demonstration in the fact that the military hero-worship which brought Grant to the presidential chair, was unable to affect Seymour in his own state, which he carried. In 1876 Seymour declined a sixth nomination for governor, and four years afterward there was every reason to believe that it was only his own unwillingness to consent which prevented his receiving a second presidential nomination. In the epoch immediately prior to, and for some years after 1876, his name

had only one political compeer in the Empire state—that of Samuel J. Tilden. This is a glorious record and the hundredth anniversary of Seymour's birth ought to receive recognition less transitory than mere ceremonial. It is an auspicious time to start a movement for a memorial monument to this redoubtable champion of state and national democracy."

AN IMPORTANT measure providing for a federal parole act is now in conference committee between the two houses and when certain minor differences are adjusted will probably become a law. Little public attention has been given this measure. The Chicago Record-Herald, however, sounds a warning with respect to it. The Record-Herald says: "The bill provides for the establishment of federal parole boards and the parole of all federal prisoners, except those convicted of murder (first degree) rape or incest, whose sentence exceeds one year. The parole board is to consist of the superintendent of prisons, the district judge and a citizen of the district in which the penitentiary is situated. Any prisoner may make application for parole after he has served one-third of his term—taking into account reduction of time for good behavior. This very broad and radical bill was considered with some care in committee and was advocated by earnest criminologists at hearings. It was not, however, properly debated on the floor of either house, and only a small number of our national lawmakers voted on it. There were vigorous protests against hasty action and 'jamming,' but they were ignored, and the question now is whether the president will sign the bill. It hardly needs saying that the parole principle is sound and safe, and that a judicious, moderate parole system in federal prisons is highly desirable. It is charged, however, that the pending bill is loose and full of danger and weakness—that it spells the release of bank looters, high-finance wreckers, perjurers, forgers and other grave offenders. In fact, it has been intimated that it was pushed by some gentlemen in the direct interest of certain criminals to whom the parole principle has no real application in a moral and social sense. These are serious charges, and the executive will doubtless look into the whole matter with the eyes and mind of a former judge who realizes that society, as well as the individual delinquent, is entitled to protection and 'mercy.'"

## THE BREWERY INFLUENCE

A press dispatch from Chicago says: "Thirty breweries, including some of the largest in the country, have joined with the Chicago police in their crusade against the selling of liquor in tenderloin resorts. These breweries have given a written guarantee that they will assist in preventing the sale of intoxicating liquors in all resorts of the city, and will not deliver beer to any resort that has been placed under the ban."

One of the brewers is reported to have said: "The brewers have made it plain that the administration of any large city can prohibit the sale of liquors in dens of vice if the administration so desires."

This is good. The brewers are to be commended for having joined in the crusade, but there is another conclusion to be drawn from the proposition, namely, that heretofore the brewers have been selling intoxicating liquor and delivering it to the resorts. There is no doubt that the brewers can exercise a great influence to reduce the evils of intemperance if they are willing to do so, but they are not, as a rule, willing to do so. They could enforce the anti-treating law if they wanted to by refusing to deliver liquor to saloons that allowed treating. They could do much to relieve the saloon of the odium that it bears if they would, but the action of the brewers in Chicago is so exceptional as to be the cause of comment. Let us hope that they will in time become so amenable to public sentiment that they will cooperate so frequently in the enforcement of the law that it will be considered a matter of course, and not, as now, an important item of news.