

# CURRENT TOPICS

THE VOTERS of Dallas, Texas, have recently used the "recall." The Dallas correspondent for the Omaha News says: "The 'recall' is one of the new devices whereby the people keep control of the public business. When a public officer—no matter for how long elected—is condemned by a large number of people, a 'recall petition' is filed and a new candidate is named for the job. Then the man already elected has to run for his office a second time, and if he doesn't get more votes than his opponent he loses his job and the recall candidate is declared elected in his place. By use of the recall the people apply the same rule—the right to hire and fire—to public employes, as has always been applied by private employers of men. It works fine in Dallas."

ACCORDING TO the News correspondent, "the people of Dallas showed that the 'recall' is a mighty weapon. They also answered many of the arguments against the recall. Chief of these was the argument that the people wouldn't turn out and vote in a re-call election. In April Dallas elected a school board of seven members. Five were new men, and two, John C. Mann and John W. George, were old members, re-elected. As usual the old men, knowing the ropes, ran things. They inaugurated a policy of secret sessions. The public didn't like the idea, but the board didn't care. Finally, in a secret meeting, the board discharged two veteran teachers. The teachers demanded to know why they were let go and what charges had been made against them. They demanded some sort of a public hearing. Refused. A citizens' mass meeting was called and a committee named to ask of the board the reasons for the discharge of the two teachers, Joseph Morgan and Charles D. Tomkins. The committee was treated with contempt. Another mass meeting was called and a blaze of indignation swept the city. A 'recall' petition was prepared. It was leveled only at Mann and George, as being the chief offenders. Two candidates were named to run against them at the special or 'recall' election. These men were J. D. Carter, a civil engineer, and John B. McGraw, a union printer. The fact that McGraw was a republican made no difference in democratic Dallas, because the people were attending to their own business just then, and didn't mind party labels. The recall election was managed by W. R. Harris, attorney for public service corporation and representing the silk stocking element, and R. H. Campbell, district organizer of the American Federation of Labor, representing the working people. So that class lines were wiped out just as party lines were. All the politicians, most of the officeholders and a fine lot of 'big business' influence lined up to beat the 'recallers.' They didn't want the people to get a taste of the power that the recall gives. There was heavy pressure from 'conservatives' and school supply people, and a lot of talk about this being 'an attack on representative government,' and the campaign was bitter. All the newspapers—good party organs—fought the recallers except the Dallas Dispatch which, alone, supported the recall. When the votes were counted it was found that ten per cent more votes had been cast on the recall election—held in midsummer—than at the regular April school election. Each of the recall candidates had won by a twenty-five per cent plurality, and the star-chamber gentlemen were ousted from office. The board of education now transacts business with open doors, and the professional politicians are sad. Thus Dallas places herself beside Los Angeles in leading the way toward the making of public servants rather than public tyrants out of officeholders."

NOW MR. ROOSEVELT is getting a taste of the claptrap which the democrats were subject to. Wall Street is sending out messages to the effect that Mr. Roosevelt's speeches in behalf of popular government are "hurting business." An Associated Press dispatch says: "Many of the leaders in the financial world, who frankly admit privately their hostility toward the ex-president, hesitate to go on record

publicly—apparently not knowing what may happen. In a statement issued today, J. S. Bache & Co., the brokerage firm that engineered James A. Patten's cotton pool, said: 'Roosevelt is a destroyer not an upbuilder. Roosevelt endeavors to tear down by violent criticism, but offers no sane remedy or reasonable method of improvement. In whatever light it is looked at, Mr. Roosevelt's speeches out west will stir up trouble. They are intended to benefit Mr. Roosevelt. His speeches are those of a demagogue and are intended, and do arouse excitement and resentment. But what he says has no real purpose of direction. By this broadspread tirade against the business honesty of the nation, he smirches all business. The position he assumes politically is an unfair one. Under cover, he is attacking the administration. But he shoulders no responsibility. Thinking people are beginning to discover him in his true light, and the best thought must eventually control.' 'I shouldn't be surprised if Roosevelt discovered and endorsed the ten commandments before he got through,' said A. Barton Hepburn, president of the Chase National bank, comptroller of the currency under President Harrison. 'Roosevelt seems to have made the remarkable discovery that there are crooks in all stations of life who should be punished. I don't think his present utterances will have any material effect on business.'

WHILE MR. ROOSEVELT was on his western trip the New York Evening Post attacked him editorially. Writing in the Outlook Mr. Roosevelt replies to the Post in this way: "In the struggle for honest politics there is no more a place for a liar than there is for a thief, and in the movement designed to put an end to the domination of the thief but little good can be derived from the assistance of the liar. Of course objection will be made to my use of this language. My answer is that I am using it merely scientifically and descriptively and because no other terms express the facts with the necessary precision. In the article in which the Evening Post comes to the defense of those in present control of the republican party in New York state, whom it affected to oppose in the past, the Evening Post, through whatever editor personally wrote the article, practiced every known form of mendacity. As far as I am concerned every man visited the White House openly and Mr. Harriman among others. I took no money from Mr. Harriman, secretly or openly to buy votes or for any other purposes. Whoever wrote the article in the Evening Post knew that this was the foulest and basest lie. The statement of the Post is not only false and malicious, is not only in direct contradiction of the facts, but is such that it could only have been made by a man who, knowing the facts deliberately intended to pervert them. Such an act stands on a level of infamy with the worst act ever performed by a corrupt member of a legislature or city official and stamps the writer with the same moral brand that stamps the bribe taker."

THE NEW YORK Evening Post, responding to Colonel Roosevelt's editorial in the Outlook, says: "Mr. Roosevelt writes in the Outlook that the editor of the Evening Post is a 'liar' and adds that objection will be made to that language. Not by us. We regard it as a decoration. To be thought worthy of receiving the order of merit which Mr. Roosevelt has bestowed upon so many distinguished citizens makes us, in his own words, 'very proud and also very humble.' We supported measures to force corporations out of politics, especially to make it illegal for them to contribute money to political campaigns, long before Mr. Roosevelt, and did our best to make corporation gifts to politicians odious at the very time when Mr. Roosevelt's agents were collecting hundreds of thousands of dollars from them to help elect him president. In view of all this, we will not retort Mr. Roosevelt's word upon him, but will merely say he has been misinformed." In conclusion the Post says: "It is plain that the president urged Mr. Harriman repeatedly and

cordially to come to the White House and that, in fact, Mr. Harriman, after he did go to see Mr. Roosevelt made a contribution of \$50,000 and Harriman himself said, 'I was not a political manager \* \* \* I could help to raise money.' This he did, collecting \$200,000, by the expenditure of which sum, he wrote to Sidney Webster 'at least 50,000 voters were turned in the city of New York alone.'

IN THE OPINION of a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, "there is a fine mediaeval ring in the talk by William II. at the banquet at Koenigsberg. In an age when even Turkey, Russia and Persia have adopted constitutions, and when China has taken the preliminary steps to frame one in 1917, a head of a great modern state declares, in effect, that constitutions should not be allowed to say the last word in matters of government. Here, by one of the most powerful of the guilds, the doctrine of the divine right of kings is proclaimed. While almost every other potentate of the earth makes some concession to the vox populi, the German kaiser tells his subjects and the rest of mankind that the vox populi is not the vox Dei whenever it comes in conflict with the views or the caprices of the crown. The voice of God, he announces, is never authentic unless it comes through his regularly anointed representative, the monarch of the day. No such talk has been heard in England since the time of the Tudors. For attempting to carry on government on this theory Charles I. of England was executed in 1649. For a smaller assault than this on the prerogatives of the populace Louis XVI. of France lost his head in 1793. The kaiser's utterance has a refreshing absence of hypocrisy. In a period of dull monotony, this will strike the world as a novel doctrine."

WHEN JEFFERSON, then in France, handed Talleyrand a copy of the Constitution of the United States Talleyrand said: "At last liberty and equality are imbedded in the charter of a great people." Referring to this remark, the Globe-Democrat writer says: "The idea made such an appeal to the rising liberalism of that day that France adopted a constitution in 1792, at the birth of its first republic, and, under the influence of Bonaparte, the Helvetic republic of Switzerland, which had been playing at democracy for five centuries, framed a constitution in 1798. In the next quarter of a century charters based on the American idea were framed in most of the states between the Rio Grande and Cape Horn. England's constitution, then and still unwritten, consisted of various concessions extorted from its kings, supplemented by acts of parliament, and these received large extensions in the franchise acts of 1832, 1867 and 1884, under which the basis of the electorate is almost as broad as it is in the United States. The house of Hapsburg, an older and a prouder dynasty than that for which William II. speaks, was, within the recollection of men still living, compelled to abandon Metternich's teachings and to give a voice to its people in the management of their affairs. A little over twenty years ago Japan introduced a written charter into Asia. Except Morocco and Abyssinia, every country in the world which is important enough to get on the map of today has a constitution, written or unwritten, or, like China, is going through the preliminary stages of getting one. Less than two-thirds of a century ago a certain monarch of the house of Hohenzollern had such a high regard for his people that he refused, as he phrased it, to allow 'a paper charter, like a second Providence, to stand between him and them.' Nevertheless, Prussia framed a constitution even before Frederick William IV.'s death. When the peoples of the various states of the present empire of Germany took the steps, in 1871, which led to the establishment of the government over which William II. rules today they may or may not have had divine inspiration for their deed. But the crown which William II. wears as German emperor, though not that which is his as king of Prussia, dates from their initiative. The empire over which William I., grand-