

CURRENT TOPICS

NOT the least remarkable result of the November balloting is the sweeping change it will effect in the personnel and in the spirit of the national senate. The New Orleans Times-Democrat says: "Governor Wilson's appeal for delivery of senate control to his party was granted, but the slender democratic majority is not the true measure of the change now in the making. Democratic ascendancy in that house is important, of course. But the experience of Mr. Cleveland, in his second administration, showed that a party majority was not always to be depended upon for fulfillment of the platform pledges. In the division between what nowadays are called progressives and reactionaries, the party line has been on occasion virtually obliterated. The senate, for many years, has been safely controlled by the element which chose to call itself "conservative" and which progressive public opinion insists upon terming "reactionary." Party changes have not availed to break that control, though it was rendered less secure by the revulsion of popular feeling against Mr. Taft's administration. The sweeping democratic victory this month, which can be interpreted, we think, as no other than a progressive victory, promises to destroy completely the reactionary grip upon the senior chamber."

THE progressive majority, continues the Times-Democrat will be much larger than the democratic majority. Of the standpat republicans identified in the popular view as reactionaries, little more than a dozen remain—and these, with few exceptions or none, are "holdovers." Guggenheim of Colorado, Curtis of Kansas, Briggs of New Jersey, Dixon of Montana, Cullom of Illinois, Richardson of Delaware, are among those to be succeeded by democrats, barring political accident. Heyburn of Idaho is dead and Lorimer of Illinois ousted. Crane of Massachusetts will follow the example of Aldrich of Rhode Island and retire voluntarily, it is understood. The reactionary remnant includes Penrose and Oliver of Pennsylvania, Smoot and Sutherland of Utah, Gallinger of New Hampshire, Dillingham of Vermont—all "holdovers." There are others, of course. It is probable that Root of New York and Lodge of Massachusetts will act with them. But there are not enough, even if the democratic senators suspected of reactionary leanings be included with republicans, to make the senate the death house for progressive legislation—providing always that the state legislatures just elected do what is expected and required of them. For there is every reason to believe that the vast majority of the senators still to be elected will be pledged to progressivism, whether they are chosen as democrats, republicans or bull mooses.

EDWARD A. FARRAR of New Orleans, has resigned as counsel to the committee charged with the investigation of the money trust. In a telegram to Representative Pujo, chairman of the committee, Mr. Farrar said: "Complications and exigencies have arisen in my professional affairs which make it imperative that I should resign post as counsel for your honorable committee in money trust investigation. I am not in a position to make the sacrifice required to give up my whole practice and devote myself to your service, as it would be my duty to do in order to serve you as you should be served. As you know, since the adjournment of the committee in June, except the month of September spent in New York in consideration of business of the committee with Mr. Untermyer, has been devoted to thankless and non-remunerative public service in my own state. During this period I had hoped to put my professional business into such shape as would permit my devoting my whole time to March 4 to the affairs of the committee. Matters have accumulated in my office which nobody but me can attend to. I had hoped to adjust these, but failed. My associate, Mr. Untermyer, and the assistant, Mr. Todd, employed by us, are able to do all the professional work required by the committee. Mr. Untermyer and I have canvassed the matter thoroughly, and in the absence of the necessary act of congress to enable the

probing of the national banks have laid out and agreed upon for submission to the committee lines of further investigation of the clearing houses, stock exchanges and the concentration of the funds and the control of affairs of great interstate commerce corporations by a handful of men in New York, who are a part of the financial ring that controls the banks and trust companies and who have the power to create a panic on the Stock Exchange any time they wish, as they did on Oct. 24, 1907, by withdrawing loans from brokers on the floor of the exchange. I profoundly appreciate the honor conferred on me by the committee in naming me as one of their counsel, and it is with the greatest regret that I find myself unable to continue in their service in an investigation which is of supremest importance to the people of this republic and which I know will disclose abuses which will require legislation, both state and federal. I shall make no claim against the committee for professional services, but will forward a statement of my actual expenses for the consideration of the committee."

LOUIS D. BRANDEIS, speaking before the Massachusetts state federation of labor recently, quoted a description of the "savings of combinations" by Gilbert H. Montague, which is self-explanatory, and is as follows: "By its preponderant influence in the business, the trust has an enormous advantage in its dealings with combined labor. In 1899 during the smelters' strike in Colorado, the American Smelting and Refining company closed the mills in which the strikers had been employed and transferred the work to its other mills; the effect was immediately to break the strike. The United States Steel corporation had similar success in 1901 with the Amalgamated association of iron and steel workers. In the renewed labor contracts, between the association and the union mills of the American Sheet Steel company, the association demanded that the scale be extended to all the mills of the company. This was refused and on July 15, 75,000 men quit work in the mills of the sheet steel, steel hoop, and tinplate companies. Had the association been dealing with competing employers, each eager to keep his mills running and to get the orders which his recalcitrant rivals could not accept, its demands would soon have been granted. During that same year the members of the International association of machinists had played upon the mutual distrust of their employers and had obtained the nine-hour day. The United States Steel corporation, however, with its solid resistance and its immense defense fund, filled its orders from other mills, and before fall completely broke the strike. When workmen are not entirely organized throughout an industry, the advantage of combination over smaller enterprise is of first importance."

AN interesting story from Los Angeles is carried by the Associated Press: A mild-mannered man carrying a box walked into Chief of Police Sebastian's office and with only a word or two, captured Central Police station, cleared out the city jail, cleared out the municipal hospital and caused the summoning of all the police reserves and every police sergeant and doctor on duty. For two hours he held absolute sway while detectives watched him, and frantic efforts were made to obtain drugs, the fumes from which might overpower him without the laying on of hands. "This box contains 86 per cent dynamite," said the man. "If anyone touches me I will pull the trigger and away goes this whole section of the city." The police station was cleared in a moment. The jail was emptied. So was the city receiving hospital just around the corner where lay a large number of patients, including a number of those who had been injured in the St. George hotel fire. At noon they still remained empty while the man with the box sat in the chief's office calmly watching Sebastian and two detectives, who in their turn watched him for an opportunity to overpower him without running any risk. The man became excited after he had been in Sebastian's office for a time. He moved his seat near

to the door to watch all approaches and announced: "If any of you dare to come within five feet of me I'll hurl you all into eternity." Once Detective Hosick inadvertently stepped close to the man. "Stop," the maniac commanded. "I will blow the first man into eternity that lays a hand on me. Get back." Hosick hastily stepped back. Just then a newspaper man entered, passing within three feet of the man. "Young man, get back," said the maniac. "If you come within five feet of me I'll blow you to atoms." The reporter fled. Chief Sebastian gave orders for the street cars to be brought in front of the jail, and lining up all available officers and newspaper men, a lane was formed through which the hundred or more prisoners walked from the jail to their places in the cars. Buildings within a radius of a hundred feet on either side of the station were ordered vacated. Just as the last of the prisoners were entering the cars, Detective Browne burst through the door of the chief's office. "We've got him. Look out," he yelled, and rushing into the middle of the street with the box held high over his head, he let it fall to the pavement. Watchers expected an explosion but the box fell harmlessly open and the sticks of dynamite were scattered. Four caps also fell to the pavement. The detective had delivered a blow on the man's head, knocking him unconscious. At the receiving hospital, after the man had regained consciousness he gave his name as Albert Davis of Long Branch. The police say they identified him as Carl Warr, a German laborer.

THE death of Vice President Sherman recalls to the Macon (Ga.) Telegraph the death of Daniel Webster. The Telegraph says: When Webster died on October 24, 1852, he was the presidential candidate of the constitutional union or independent whig party, and Charles J. Jenkins, of Georgia, was his running mate. This party, which carried Georgia against secession in this state's gubernatorial election in 1851, represented an earnest movement to preserve the Union and at the same time to maintain intact the rights guaranteed the slaveholding states under the federal constitution. It adopted as its platform the Clay compromise of 1850 and the Georgia resolutions of the same year. Its choice of Daniel Webster as its standard bearer was largely the result of his speech in the United States senate on March 7, 1850, in favor of the compromise, and in which he rebuked the northern states for their legislative repudiations of that provision of the federal constitution relating to the restoration of slaves escaping from one state into another.

SPEAKING before the New York Manufacturers' association in Brooklyn, Prof. Irving Fisher, of Yale university, declared that the present high cost of living was due primarily to what he termed gold inflation and credit inflation rather than to the popularly supposed influences, all of which are more or less local in their application. "As these two influences, gold and credit, are closely related," said the political economist, "we may unite them in one word—inflation. It seems a curious fact that each generation seems to forget the costly lessons which have been learned in the past as to the inflation of the currency. History is full of illustrations of paper money inflation and the terrible consequence in disturbing contracts and business stability, as well as the injury to the salaried classes and the wage-earners. Yet scarcely was the provision made for the redemption of the greenbacks before we seemed to have forgotten the terrible evils which they had caused. Consequently we allowed congress to pass a law preventing the retirement of the greenbacks and two laws providing for inflating our currency with silver. I believe now that business men should join in a campaign of education to make the public understand that gold inflation is just as disastrous as silver inflation."

IN Prof. Fisher's opinion the business world will yet be compelled to "emancipate itself from the fluctuation in either direction of the pur-