

# CURRENT TOPICS

THE Philippine Islands will be conspicuous in the public thought from now on. A Washington dispatch, carried by the Associated Press, says: A conference on Philippine independence will be held between President-elect Wilson and Manuel Quezon, Philippine delegate in congress, early in February. Mr. Quezon, who left for Boston to address the Atlantic club on the independence issue in reply to President Taft's Philippine suggestions in his message to congress, said that he planned to talk over the whole question with Governor Wilson later, and that he was sure Filipino independence could be achieved in the next four years. In his Boston speech in reply to President Taft and in his presentation of the case to President-elect Wilson Mr. Quezon said he would suggest a practical plan by which the democratic party might carry out the pledge of Philippine independence. "The president," said Mr. Quezon, in a statement recently, "should send to the archipelago as governor general a man who sympathizes with and is thoroughly in accord with Philippine independence and who has the courage of his convictions. That is of vital importance. A governor general can make or mar independence plans as he wishes; he could, if he wished, bring about the establishment of an independent government within the four years for which Governor Wilson has been elected. I believe congress will pass the Jones bill for an experimental period of eight years and absolute independence thereafter, but we have a fight ahead of us. Even without the enactment of the Jones bill, the president, if he wished, could of his own authority establish a provisional Philippine government. The real change within the eight years' provisional period proposed by the Jones bill is the establishment of an upper house of the Philippine legislature, to be composed of Filipinos. This the president can do by appointing as members of the Philippine commission, now the upper house, only Filipinos, instead of Americans, now constituting the majority." Mr. Quezon said he represented in his ideas the sentiment of the rank and file of the Philippine people.

SPEAKING of the Philippine question, a writer in the Nashville Tennessean says: While the independence of the Philippine Islands in the recent national campaign was, as compared with other questions, of minor importance, still it was emphatically pronounced for at Baltimore, and as the democratic party from the start opposed either absolute acquirement of that country or extended colonization of it, and as the people voted for the freedom of the islands, it is assumed that democrats will make some provisions looking to converting those possessions into an independent government. The democratic party has been consistent and steadfast in its pronouncement for the independence of that country, and now it has triumphed on the declaration that it "favors an immediate declaration of the nation's purpose to recognize the independence of the Philippine Islands as soon as a stable government can be established, such independence to be guaranteed by us until the neutralization of the islands can be secured by treaty with other powers." In view of this strong declaration by the party that is about to come into power controlling, as it will, both houses of congress and the presidency, it is likely that something specific will be done along the lines indicated, in that the way will be opened for the independence of the Filipino people. If during the ten years the people of that country have rapidly advanced toward a high state of civilization it has not been wholly due to the tutelage of the United States, for there must have been primary virtue and inherent merit in the people, and a large share of the credit must go to them.

THIS view is justified by the 1912 report of the secretary of war, from which report the following is taken: "It is fourteen years since the United States entered the Philippines. It is ten years since the establishment there under the organic act of congress of July 1, 1902. This has been a decade of notable achievement. There is no other instance in history where, after four years of war and insurrection, to over 7,000,000 of an entirely alien race have

been so soon given not merely the forms of civil control, but immediate and extensive participation in their own government. Similarly, there is no parallel to the material, mental and moral progress shown in these ten years of civil government by so many millions of people, held for centuries in ignorance and, in effect in political and economic bondage."

THE Tennessean writer concludes: Right in the teeth of the facts which formed a basis for this report President Taft and his party have interposed objections to granting independence to the Filipino people, and if the vote in the recent election is to be accepted as bearing on this question only about 3,400,000 stand with Mr. Taft and his party as against about 11,000,000 cast for Mr. Wilson and Mr. Roosevelt, that may be fairly counted for the independence of the Philippines. If the democrats follow the pronounced policy of their party steps will be taken to open the way for the independence they have so long and so constantly promised the Filipino people.

EASTER SUNDAY for 1913 will happen on March 23. A writer in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch says: Easter bonnets will blossom earlier this year than they have since 1856 and earlier than they will burst into bloom for another century. The earliest date on which Easter can fall is March 22, but that hasn't happened since 1818. This year it will be March 23, the same date on which it fell in 1856 and 1845. The Rev. Father Martin S. Brennan, a noted St. Louis astronomer, told a Post-Dispatch reporter that tables computed by mathematicians have not been carried far enough to show just how long it will be before Easter again falls on so early a date, but that it will not occur until some time after the year 2000. The rule for fixing the date of Easter originally was that it was the Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox. The equinox falls on March 21. According to a ruling of the council at Nice, if March 21 is a Saturday and there is a full moon on that day, the following day will be Easter. This year March 21 will be Friday and there will be a full moon Saturday.

THE death of Whitelaw Reid, who was editor of the New York Tribune, prompts a writer in the Boston Herald, to say: The obituary notices of Whitelaw Reid date the assuming of full editorial control of the Tribune by him as of July, 1872, when Mr. Greeley withdrew from that position after he had been nominated for the presidency. While this is substantially correct it takes no account of the fact that after Mr. Greeley's disastrous defeat he resumed the editorship for what proved to be a brief but critical period in the newspaper which he had founded. On the morning after the publication of the election returns Mr. Greeley came cheerfully back to the Tribune office, hung up his hat on the old peg and announced his resumption of the editorship which he had relinquished "on embarking in another line of business a few months before." The same issue of the Tribune contained a famous editorial, entitled "Crumbs of Comfort." In this editorial it was set forth that for many years the Tribune had been supposed to keep, for the benefit of the idle and incapable, a sort of federal employment agency. Any man, it went on to say, who had voted the republican ticket believed that it was his duty and the privilege of Editor Greeley to get him a job in the custom house. "Every red-nosed politician who had cheated at the caucus and fought at the polls looked to the editor of the Tribune to secure for him appointment as gauger, as army chaplain or as minister to France. It is a source of profound satisfaction to us that office-seekers will keep aloof from a defeated candidate who has not influence enough at Washington or at Albany to get a sweeper appointed under the sergeant-at-arms or as deputy-sub-assistant clerk in the paste pot section of the folding room. At last we shall be let alone to mind our own affairs and manage our own newspaper without being called aside every minute by lazy people whom we don't know and to spend our strength in efforts to

benefit only those who do not deserve assistance. At last we shall be able to keep our office clear of blatherskites and political beggars." It was assumed by the Tribune readers that this astonishing editorial was written by Mr. Greeley. However that may be, it is certain that he was very angry when he read it in the next morning's paper, and he wrote an apology to his readers stating that the editorial appeared through the editor's inadvertence and that it was a monstrous fable based on some other experience than that of Editor Greeley. It was a severe rebuke to the writer, whoever he was, and Mr. Greeley was finally prevailed upon to withhold it from publication. So this episode in the Tribune's history remains wrapped in mystery to everybody outside the Tribune office of those days. It was a few days after this exciting outbreak that Mr. Greeley took to his bed, from which he never rose, and a few days later he died. The intellectual strain, continued through so many years of unceasing industry and enormous toil, finally conquered him. Cerebral trouble developed itself in the usual form of sleeplessness with a fatal result and on the 29th of November he passed away, exclaiming "The country is gone! The Tribune is gone! I am gone!" It was at the close of this tragedy that Mr. Reid finally resumed full control of the Tribune. He was subsequently enabled to purchase the property and not long after that he signaled his success by the erection of what came to be known as the Tall Tower. This home of the Tribune loomed high and large above all the surrounding buildings at the lower end of Manhattan island. Now it is an obscure eminence almost hidden by the scores of skyscrapers surrounding it.

THE handy nickel is dignified with an interesting editorial in the Oklahoma City Oklahoman, in which it said: Every child knows what a nickel is, and every youngster is posted as to the possibilities of a nickel in domestic commerce. But no person knows how many nickels there are in circulation, not even the treasury officials. There have been 800,000,000 issued since we have been using the convenient five-cent pieces but many of them have been lost. How many people know that the humble nickel is the most important coin now in use? It is more circulated than any other piece of money that has a place in the currency. How many things purchased every day by the multitudes are sold for a nickel? This humble coin travels with constant velocity and does not remain long enough in the hands of any possessor for the temporary owner to get acquainted with it. This is because a nickel is never hoarded. The constant demand for it keeps it in the pocket ready for use whenever called for. It is not so with pennies, which are put in boxes until enough have been collected for use. The penny is too small in its individuality to cut any ice in shopping and so the occasion for it is limited. On account of the incessant traveling of the nickel, a comparatively small quantity serves the purposes of a large community. The popularity of the nickel as a coin makes it of interest to remind the public that the government is about to issue a new nickel of the Indian and buffalo type, to take the place of the nickels that the children lose.

TRUE to expectations, Governor Ralston of Indiana, is looking after the public interest. In his message to the legislature he recommended a strong law prohibiting watered stock. In his message Governor Ralston says: "The many properties and the vast amount of capital that would come under the jurisdiction of a utilities commission indicate the ability and care required in drafting a utilities law absolutely fair to both the public and those having their money invested in such properties. A utilities law should empower the commission to make physical valuation and to ascertain the amount invested and the amount necessary to keep up repairs and pay operating expenses. These things are essential to be known as a basis for arriving at proper charges for service. It is important that the law should contain a provision against watered stock and overbonding and against abuses in granting franchise, and it should require a system of uniform ac-