

CURRENT TOPICS

THE tariff question is just now uppermost in the democratic heart. An Associated Press dispatch, under date of Washington, April 4th, says: The democratic tariff revision bill was completed tonight with the exception of a final decision on the sugar tariff. From beginning to end it is a measure modeled in accord with the ideas of President Wilson, with wool, meats and many other foodstuffs and clothing materials on the free list; with low duties on all agricultural products and foodstuffs that are not free, and with the tariff on chemical, steel and other products cut far below the present protective rates. The senate tariff leaders asked today for an opportunity to study the bill until Sunday afternoon. They will then confer with Chairman Underwood of the house committee on ways and means and later will have a final conference with President Wilson. A careful analysis of the senate will be made meantime, to determine if wool, "one-cent" sugar and low rates on "market basket" products will prove acceptable to a majority of the democrats.

BRIEFLY summarized the tariff developments of the day were: President Wilson's ultimatum to sugar interests that they must agree to a tariff of 1 cent per pound for three years, with free sugar after that time, or he would secure free sugar at once. The completion of the bill by the ways and means committee with the exception of the sugar schedule. The committee is prepared to agree on free sugar if the president insists. Income tax rates fixed at 1 per cent for all corporation incomes above \$5,000; 1 per cent on personal incomes from \$4,000 to \$20,000; 2 per cent from \$20,000 to \$50,000; 3 per cent from \$50,000 to \$100,000; 4 per cent above \$100,000. The president submitted his proposal on the sugar tariff to Representative Broussard of Louisiana early today. Louisiana senators and representatives conferred and sounded out other members of the senate to determine whether enough strength could be secured to fight the free sugar features of the plan. They had reported no decision tonight, however, as to the course they would take.

THE Associated Press correspondent adds: Notwithstanding the sugar controversy, events so shaped themselves today as to indicate that the house, the senate and the president will come to a definite and final agreement upon the tariff bill before Monday and that the measure will be presented to the house early next week as an administration measure and with all tariff leaders behind it. After a short meeting of the democratic members of the finance committee today, Senators Simmons, James and Hughes called on Mr. Underwood and discussed the wool, sugar and agricultural tariffs. A demand from some quarters in the senate for an increase in the agricultural duties and a doubt as to the success of both free wool and free sugar in the senate constitute the problems over which the senate leaders will work tonight and tomorrow. The house tariff makers have left matters entirely in the hands of the president. Members of the senate finance committee today declared there would be an ultimate agreement with the president over the contested points. It is understood that unless the sugar compromise is accepted by the senators from southern states the finance committee probably will act on its own initiative and comply with President Wilson's desires. The situation as it has developed this week apparently is a consummation of the plan laid out by the president and both branches of congress for an agreement upon tariff revision before the new bill leaves the custody of the committee that has drawn it. Leading senators predicted today that there would be no important matters unsettled when the bill is introduced in the house.

CHAIRMAN UNDERWOOD when the ways and means committee adjourned for the day, seemed in a greatly relieved frame of mind, and expressed the hope that the committee would hear from the president and the senate

committee by Sunday at the latest. "Our bill is ready," said Mr. Underwood. "The sugar tariff is the only serious point in controversy and our committee has agreed to do whatever the president wants to do, after he has made up his mind. We expected to get word from the president today after his conference with the senators, but the word did not come. I believe, however, that the whole matter will be determined tomorrow. If the president can not bring about an agreement on this schedule we are ready anyway, and the bill will go to the house as a committee bill. This committee has agreed thus far to every change the president suggested in our original bill as it reached him. His suggestions were few. Most features of the bill met with his heartiest approval. The committee was of the mind that no bill should be presented which President Wilson might veto when it reached him. Having made the changes he suggested, we are now ready to accede to the further recommendations he may make."

A WASHINGTON dispatch to the Omaha World-Herald, tells this story: Elevator operators in the state department no longer will be compelled to remain on duty over time while the secretary of state is in the building. Secretary Bryan believes that when an elevator conductor has worked eight hours it is about time for him to quit for the day. Incidentally, he is of the opinion that walking down a double flight of stairs will work no great hardship on any governmental official. Recently Mr. Bryan was detained in his office until 6:30 in the evening, two hours after the clerks had left the building. When the secretary came out of his office he started for the stairs. But the elevator man who runs the lift nearest Mr. Bryan's office was still on the job. "What hours do you work?" asked the secretary. "From 8:45 a. m. until 4:45 p. m.," said the man. "Well, it's now after 6:30. You ought to have been home long ago." "But it's against the rule to leave when the secretary is in the building," explained the operator. "Well, it's not necessary for you to remain while this secretary is detained after hours," said Mr. Bryan with emphasis. "Besides it won't hurt any government official to walk down two flights of stairs."

A NEWS item in the Washington (D. C.) Herald follows: Secretary of State William J. Bryan was recently engaged to teach an Interdenominational Bible class in Washington at 3 o'clock every Sunday afternoon. Mr. Bryan will begin on April 6, and it is probable that on April 13, when he expects to be absent, Vice President Marshall will teach in his place. Arrangements for the class, which will meet in some theater or public hall, were completed when Rexford L. Holmes, president of the District of Columbia Christian Endeavor, called upon Mr. Bryan and discussed details. Mr. Bryan probably will talk in each lesson for about forty-five minutes. His first lesson will be upon "The Larger Life." Percy S. Foster will be leader of the chorus which will conduct the song service. Mr. Foster will be assisted by William E. Braithwaite, superintendent of music for the Christian Endeavor. Arrangements for the class are the result of a recent call upon Mr. Bryan by the following committee from the Christian Endeavor: Rexford L. Holmes, Harold G. Watts, Paul H. Watson, Allan C. Muddiman, Horace M. Gillman, E. C. Trumboer, jr., W. E. Braithwaite, Edward Tarring, Francis K. MacNerhany, Rev. Samuel H. Woodrow, Rev. George A. Miller, Rev. Hermon S. Pinkham, Rev. Alfred E. Barrows, Percy S. Foster, Owen P. Kellar, and Rev. W. A. Melvin.

A LITERARY treasure was recently uncovered at the national capital. A Washington dispatch, carried by the Associated Press says: Long used to prop a bureau that days now distant had lost a castor, a book brought \$2,000 to two aged women and joy to the heart of a collector of old volumes, who announced that another "first edition" of Edgar Allen Poe's

second work, "Al Aaraaf," had been found. The women, a mother and daughter, had called John T. Loomis, a second hand book dealer, to their rooms to look over a small library they possessed. The offering did not attract the man and he was leaving when he saw a cardboard bound volume under the edge of the bureau. "What is this?" he said, stooping. "That's nothing," said the daughter. "It's by Mr. Poe. He used to call on Adeline and Alvina Wolfe, two ladies who lived in Baltimore, and he gave it to them. It fell very flat when it was published. Loomis could have had it virtually for nothing. Instead he gave the women \$2,000. A first edition copy of the work recently brought \$2,700 at auction."

REFERRING to the new ambassador to the court of St. James, the St. Louis Republic says: Walter H. Page, editor of The World's Work, is a man worthy to represent this great republic near the court of St. James. Mr. Page is a North Carolinian by birth. He was educated in Virginia and Maryland and sojourned for many years in the intellectually rare air of Boston. He is a typical American. This is not the language of diplomacy; The World's Work proves it, a publication with many imitators, yet it speaks the voice of progressive America. Whitelaw Reid was, like Mr. Page, a man of culture and charm. But he was the editor of a journal as much devoted to the ideals of the past as Mr. Page's magazine is concerned with the movements of the future. The characters of the Taft and Wilson administrations are mirrored in the spirit of the editors—both of America's best—they respectively commissioned to the court of St. James.

THE Nation, an English newspaper, referring to the appointment by President Wilson of Walter H. Page, to be ambassador to the court of St. James, says: "In offering the London embassy to Mr. Page President Wilson has made an interesting experiment. He has boldly reverted to the scholar diplomat as the type of man most qualified to represent the United States abroad. In doing so, he has paid a silent but striking compliment to the good sense of the British people. He has assumed that what we most value in an American ambassador is not his wealth and his ability to lavish it on magnificent houses and huge entertainments, but his personality and his achievements and the extent to which he brings with him the true flavor of American life." The Nation declares that President Roosevelt tried the same experiment with Dr. David Jayne Hill, former ambassador to Germany from America. After a description of Dr. Hill's previous career, the Nation says: "Dr. Hill's predecessor was Mr. Charlemagne Tower, a gentleman of very much wealth. He was prodigal of fetes and receptions. He leased the finest house in the capital and greatly pleased the emperor by the splendor he was able to maintain. The change was as Mr. Roosevelt intended it to be—a thorough one. It was an appeal from the eccentric, commercialized Berlin of today, to the city of plain living and high thinking of a generation ago. There is no need to go into details of the unhappy but illuminating sequel. When the emperor learned that whatever Dr. Hill's other qualifications for the post were, his private means would permit him only to maintain a modest establishment and that the day of splash and glitter were over, it was one of those incidents that revealed a man and a society."

Mr. Bryan's Selected Speeches. Revised and arranged in a convenient two-volume edition. These books present Mr. Bryan's most notable addresses and orations, and cover the chief important phases and features of his career as an orator and advocate. A familiarly intimate and interesting biographical introduction by Mary Baird Bryan, his wife, opens Volume I. The two volumes, bound in cloth, sent to any address prepaid on receipt of price, \$2.00. The half leather edition, 2 vols., sent for \$3.00, prepaid. Address The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.