

CURRENT TOPICS

AN OSWEGO, N. Y., CLERGYMAN HAS CREATED a small sensation by entering into a contract with the bill poster to bill the city advertising his sermons in the manner employed by the theatrical agent. The name of this clergyman is Rev. C. H. Jones and he is pastor of the First Presbyterian church. During the summer months he will hold daily services to be called "Twilight meetings." He proposes to advertise these services by posters on the city bill boards, windows, street cars, and other public places. Replying to criticism of his plan, Mr. Jones asks: "Why should satan have a monopoly on publicity?"

SO MUCH DISHONESTY HAS BEEN REVEALED in the postoffice investigations that several senators and representatives say that they will insist upon a congressional inquiry. Investigations into other departments may follow and it is freely predicted that systematic inquiry will develop dishonesty in other branches of the federal service. Some idea of the extent of the corruption in the postoffice department will be obtained when it is known that practically all large divisions of the postoffice department are now without heads. George W. Beavers of the salaries and allowance division has resigned. A. W. Machen, of the free delivery system, was removed and he has been indicted for accepting bribes. G. A. C. Carstiancy of the free delivery system has been suspended. George E. Lorenz, postmaster at Toledo, has been indicted as a partner of Machen in the contract frauds. Dillar B. Groff has been indicted as a member of the contract firm that had fraudulent relations with Machen. James P. Metcalf, superintendent of the money order system, has been removed. James N. Tyner of the law department and D. V. Miller, his assistant, have been removed; the former on the charge of "indiscretion, and the latter on the charge of accepting bribes. McGregor and Upton, clerks in Machen's office, have been indicted. Samuel A. Groff, the other member of the contracting firm, has been indicted for collusion against the government. Charles Hedges, superintendent of the city delivery service of the postoffice department, has been charged with soliciting stock in a gold mining company from postmasters and also for giving the same gratis to secretaries of certain representatives.

THE WASHINGTON GRAND JURY HAS RETURNED indictments in the case relating to the street letter box fasteners and is now investigating a number of other contracts made by the postoffice department. It is announced from Washington that an investigation will be made of the money order bureau and the dead letter office; also that the railway mail contracts are to be inquired into. It is predicted that this will prove a fruitful field. The railroads are paid for carrying the mails upon a basis established by the general mail weighing every six months. The railroad officials are not presumed to know when the weighing will take place, but somehow or other, they have managed to be informed, and this advance knowledge has given them the opportunity, which they have not been slow to take advantage of, to increase the mail at that particular time. The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says that the government is paying at least one trans-continental line more for the transportation of the mails than is charged for first-class passenger traffic and that pound for pound this particular railroad gets more from the government upon mail carried across the continent than it does out of its passenger traffic.

THE PURCHASE FROM A CALIFORNIA company of 17,000 letter box devices for indicating the hours of collection of the mails is now being investigated. The Washington Post says that 7,000 of these devices originally were ordered at a cost of four dollars or more each, or a profit of 100 per cent on the cost, and that a further order for 10,000 was placed notwithstanding the original 7,000 devices were not used, but were reposing in the storehouse. The company controlling this device is largely made up of California postal employees and it is charged that former Representative Loud of California, formerly chairman of the house committee on postal

affairs, took an active part in behalf of this company and wrote several letters urging the adoption of the device by the department. It is announced that every branch of the postoffice department is to be investigated, that all the large postoffices in the country will be included in this inquiry. Much dissatisfaction because of Postmaster General Payne's original attitude toward these investigations is expressed and it is said that Mr. Roosevelt is in receipt of many letters urging Mr. Payne's retirement. It is said, however, that Mr. Payne will not retire and that he enjoys the confidence and support of Mr. Roosevelt.

AMONG THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE postoffice investigation, none are more interesting than those relating to the rural mail delivery system. It seems to be well established that it was intended to use this system as a great political machine. Some idea of the methods of the machinists will be obtained when it is known that out of the 11,199 rural routes in the United States, 3,792 were allotted to the four states, Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois. Commenting upon this fact, the New York Post says: "Can we resist the conviction that there is a direct connection between that fact and the other fact that the most powerful republican politicians and congressmen came from those states?" The Post says: "There is no longer any denying that the scandal is one of huge proportion. Its investigation has only begun. We must make our rulers, from the president down, understand that such crimes in the public service hurt us and make us angry. They are a national disgrace, which the people must resent. Any one in authority who would excuse or shield a single guilty official or politician, we must make feel the weight of our displeasure. And, for the future, we must all insist, not merely upon a wholesale transfer of the detected rascals from office to jail, but upon new safeguards, new checks upon congressional greed, new courage on the part of the chief executive, which will make the recurrence of the great national shame more difficult, if not impossible."

IT IS VERY GENERALLY AGREED THAT tremendous significance attaches to the result of the German election. The socialists made large gains, their candidates polling more than 2,500,000 votes, a gain of 400,000 since the elections of 1898. The socialists gained twelve seats in the reichstag, carrying every district except one in Berlin and made sweeping gains in Saxony. Herr Bebel, the socialist leader, declared: "Saxony is now the red kingdom." The New York Tribune says that the result of the election "is a sign of the times it does not seem possible that an imperial government can afford to ignore. It shows that the rising tide of socialism is still rising in spite of all barriers and threatens soon to flood the whole land. At each election hitherto anti-socialists of various parties, observing the increase in the socialist vote, have said that the high water mark had then been reached and that thenceforth there would be reaction and decline. Such cheerful prophecies have not been fulfilled, and there is no apparent reason for thinking that any such that may now be made will be fulfilled. On the contrary, it seems more probable that five years hence the socialists will sweep the whole empire almost as thoroughly as they now have the kingdom of Saxony."

THAT SOCIALISM IN GERMANY HAS thrived on persecution and repression and that the government classes are face to face with an internal problem which threatens the foundation of the monarchy and empire, is pointed out by the Brooklyn Citizen. The Citizen interprets the recent elections to mean that modern Germany "is marching with seven-league boots to the overthrow of existing institutions. Underneath all of the outward splendor of imperial magnificence and military display, the Germany that toils that others may enjoy is seeking to make itself free." The New York Tribune, while admitting that among the German socialists there are some extremists who would instantly abolish the throne and make an equal division of all property, says that they are in the minority, and

that the average so-called socialist in Germany is far less radical than his American namesake, by whom, indeed, he would probably be regarded as a conservative. The Tribune explains: "The German socialists are chiefly a party of protest. They are protesting not against the monarchy, but against the abuses of the monarchical system. If these abuses were reformed they would be satisfied. They would probably, the great majority of them, be quite content with some such governmental system as that which exists in England. But if their protests are not heeded, and if their demands for reform are not granted, they will steadily grow more and more extreme until they become outright revolutionists. In that consideration is seen the peril of 'laissez faire,' and in it is also seen the most pertinent suggestion for governmental action for the averting of the socialist menace."

MAJOR JAMES BURTON POND, WHO DIED in Jersey City June 21, was an interesting character. At the time of his death Major Pond was sixty-five years of age. When a very young man he became an ardent abolitionist and served in the civil war, rising from the ranks until he became a major. Major Pond became famous as a lecture bureau manager and among the lecturers and singers whose tours were managed by Major Pond are mentioned the following: Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, John B. Gough, Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker, Frederick Douglass, Canon Kingsley, Wilkie Collins, Charles Bradlaugh, Matthew Arnold, Archdeacon Farrar, Henry M. Stanley, Max O'Rell, Dean Hole, Ian Maclaren, Sir Edwin Arnold, Conan Doyle, William Parsons, Mrs. Annie Besant, Archibald Forbes, Frederick Villers, Anthony Hope, George Augustus Sala, Israel Zangwill, Justin Huntly McCarthy, M. P.; Mark Twain, Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, Mme. Sarah Grand, Josh Billings, Bill Nye, George W. Cable, Anna E. Dickenson, Julia Ward Howe, Charlotte Cushman, Clara Louise Kellogg, Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, Emma Abbott, Ann Eliza Young, Richard Le Gallienne, Thomas Nast, William Lloyd Garrison, Charles Sumner,

THE INCIDENTS OF POND'S FIRST MEETING with Charles Sumner were frequently referred to by the famous manager. The story as Pond was in the habit of telling it is related in the New York American in this way: "Charles Sumner was an aristocrat. He was my father's ideal. He walked nine miles to hear him speak. Father always spoke of him as the Honorable Charles Sumner, so great was his reverence of the man. He enjoyed the speech immensely. I do not know whether I did or not. Father sat near, with the intention of rushing up and greeting him when he had finished, but the honorable Charles was too quick for him. He had vanished. Father said: 'James, the Honorable Charles Sumner is going to Milwaukee tomorrow morning, and we can ride with him a part of the way.' He was in the drawing room car when we got on the train. Father stepped up to him and said: 'The Honorable Charles Sumner, I have read your speeches. I have felt it the duty of every American to take you by the hand. This is my son. He has returned from the Kansas conflict.' Honorable Charles Sumner did not see father nor his son, but he saw the brakeman, and said: 'Can you get me a place where I will be undisturbed?' Father's heart was almost broken."

THE YALE SUMMER SCHOOL OF FORESTRY opened at Milford, Pa., July 1. The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says that the work of this school, it is believed by those scientists connected with the government who are interested in such matters, will be of far-reaching importance in directing the attention of the general public to the question of the conservation of the forest and the dangers attendant on their indiscriminate destruction. It is further pointed out that unusual interest attaches to this school in view of the extraordinary floods, cyclones, and forest fires which have prevailed in various parts of the United States within the last few months, their ravages being accompanied by great loss of life and property. The meteorological influence of the forest is well known and appreciated, but little understood, and