

CURRENT TOPICS

THE republican caucus in the Missouri legislature chose for United States senator, Thomas N. Neidringhaus. A few days after the caucus had adjourned, Representative Grace, republican, representing in part the city of St. Louis, introduced a resolution providing for an investigation of the charge that the St. Louis brewers had given Mr. Neidringhaus \$21,000 to be used in the senatorial campaign. Many republicans vigorously opposed the Grace resolution, but with the aid of democratic votes it was adopted. Mr. Neidringhaus is chairman of the republican state committee and after being summoned before the investigating committee appointed by the legislature, he gave some interesting testimony. The Associated Press report, referring to Mr. Neidringhaus's testimony, says that he denied that he made the contribution mentioned in the Grace resolution or any person had done so for him. He also denied that the figures—\$21,000—appeared in the statement filed with the recorder of deeds by the state republican committee, showing the campaign contributions.

MR. NEIDRINGHAUS further stated that he contributed out of his own pocket \$1,800 to the republican campaign fund and then, referring to the \$21,000 contribution, he said: "A few days before the visit of Senator Fairbanks to St. Louis it was found that the liabilities of the state committee were about \$31,000, with practically no money in the bank. I was personally responsible to the persons with whom the debts had been contracted. I spoke of the matter to the chairman of the executive committee, who said: 'You are a fool for assuming that responsibility.' I replied: 'So convinced am I of the possibilities of carrying Missouri with sufficient funds, that I will go any length before I will stop the campaign at this point.' About this time Senator Fairbanks came to St. Louis, and, on the request of Adolphus Busch, who is a personal friend of the senator, a dinner was arranged at Mr. Busch's house, at which were former Senator Mason of Illinois, Congressman Bartholdt of St. Louis, W. S. Dickey, Otto Stifel, Senator Fairbanks and myself. During the dinner I explained that I had been refused contributions by prominent republicans and stated that 'if I had \$25,000 I would guarantee the state of Missouri would cast its electoral vote for Roosevelt and Fairbanks.' Mr. Busch then said: 'I am willing to join with yourself and Mr. Stifel to guarantee this \$25,000. I will assume half that guarantee if you and Mr. Stifel will assume the other half.' I immediately announced that I assumed my share, and Mr. Stifel agreed. It was stated, however, that we should make one more appeal to the national committee for \$25,000, and if at any time we should be fortunate enough to receive this sum this guarantee should be returned to the guarantors."

IN REPLY to a question put by a member of the committee, Mr. Neidringhaus stated that he was under no obligation of any kind on account of this guarantee to use any influence whatever to effect legislation before the assembly of Missouri. Mr. Neidringhaus further explained that the deficiency of \$31,000 was reduced to \$21,000 by collections and that the latter amount was taken care of in accordance with the agreement between himself, Busch and Stifel. Mr. Neidringhaus stated to the committee that he did not consider the \$25,000 pledged by Busch, Stifel and himself in the light of a contribution to the state campaign fund, as had the money been later secured from other sources it would have been refunded to them. Mr. Neidringhaus also stated that if the republicans had failed to carry Missouri for Roosevelt and Fairbanks he would have been personally responsible for half the sum subscribed.

REPRESENTATIVE COOK of Howell county created considerable stir by charging that he was offered money to influence his vote in favor of Neidringhaus. The senate committee on investigation unanimously reported holding Mr. Neidringhaus culpable in accepting campaign funds from the brewing companies. The committee found that these contributions were not used for the purpose of influencing legislation but said that it was the duty of Mr. Neidringhaus as acting

treasurer of the state committee to show in his statement of campaign receipts the source of the contributions.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Neidringhaus received the majority of the vote in the lower house on the first day's balloting, he did not receive a majority in the senate, which is democratic. Therefore a vote on joint ballot was necessary. When the house met in joint convention, January 18, six republicans bolted Neidringhaus. They were followed by two other republicans. After one ballot had been taken, no election having resulted, adjournment was taken to the following day. On Thursday, Jan. 19, the two houses met again in joint convention without any change in the vote. On January 20, the house met again and the eight bolting republicans were joined by another bolter. The vote on this, the fourth ballot, stood, Neidringhaus 80, Cockrell 81, Kerens 9, Pettijohn 1. Eighty-six votes are necessary to a choice. The convention then dissolved and the two houses adjourned until ten o'clock Monday, January 23. Those republicans who bolted Neidringhaus' nomination have issued a signed statement in which they seek to justify their action on the ground that Neidringhaus obtained the nomination because of the claim that he had contributed to the Missouri campaign fund the sum of \$21,000. The statement says that it has developed that most of this money was contributed by two St. Louis brewers and that Neidringhaus in fact contributed only \$1,400. These bolters say that had these facts been known prior to the holding of the republican caucus Mr. Neidringhaus would not have been the nominee of the party.

AN INTERESTING letter, said to have been written by Field Marshal Blucher, has been discovered in the archives of a Polish family living in Paris. The Paris correspondent for the New York American says: "The ancestors of this family acquired possession of the document during the war that finished Napoleon's reign in France and Europe, the courier, carrying Blucher's letter, being caught by a detachment of French troops. The letter is dated from Compiègne, June 17, 1815, and addressed to Blucher's wife. 'Here I am sitting in the room where Marie Louise celebrated her wedding night,' writes the general. 'There can be nothing more beautiful and pleasant to behold. Too bad I must be off tomorrow for I am due at Paris within three days. I still hope to catch Bonaparte and will surely hang the scoundrel to the nearest tree, with weights on his boots. When he is dead the emperors and kings may indulge in all the protesting they like. I want to see him good and dead; I am tired of chasing after him.' The letter winds up: 'This place is full of the most beautiful things that you would appreciate immensely, but I have no time to pack anything.'"

ADMIRAL DEWEY, as president of the naval board, has recommended the creation of a reserve list of the navy to which commanders and captains who are past a given age shall be transferred. Admiral Dewey says: "It is imperative that steps be taken to promote the younger officers to command and flag ranks, thereby prolonging their tenure of responsible commands and insuring in the highest rank officers who have had experience in other subordinate duties." To bring this about the board recommends that all captains, on reaching the age of 60, shall be placed on the reserve list, and that this age limit shall be decreased to 50 years; that all present captains and commanders formerly of the engineers' corps, and all other officers who on promotion to the rank of commander are by existing law restricted to engineering duty on shore, shall be placed on the reserve list; that officers on the reserve list "shall perform shore duty only, and shall receive the same pay and allowances as officers on the active list performing similar duty; in short, that there shall be no difference between officers on the reserve and those on the active list, except that the former shall not go to sea." The board further recommends that in order to provide officers for the new ships the course at Annapolis be reduced from four to three years until 1913, the number of midshipmen at the academy to be

maintained at its present strength until that year; that the entrance age into the navy be from 15 to 18 years; that the graduated midshipmen be commissioned after one year at sea after competitive examination; that ensigns after one year be promoted to the grade of Lieutenant, junior grade.

JOHN NICHOLAS BROWN of Providence, R. I., enjoys the distinction of being the richest small boy in the world. The Brooklyn Standard Union says: "In 1900 the boy's father, the late John Nicholas Brown of New York and Providence, bequeathed him property valued at \$6,000,000. A later bequest from the boy's uncle, the late Harold Brown, added \$4,000,000 to his available wealth. He is also the heir apparent to several other immense estates, and if he should reach middle life he will be one of the richest landed proprietors in the United States."

THE customs officers, as well as the financiers, seem to be somewhat interested in the affairs of Mrs. Chadwick. A dispatch to the Cincinnati Enquirer under date of Cleveland, Ohio, Jan. 12, says: "Nathan Loeser, receiver for Mrs. Chadwick, has made an examination of the jewels held by Henry W. Wuerst of Elyria, Ohio, as collateral for a loan. He estimates their value at \$17,000. Wuerst's claim amounts to \$20,000. The most valuable piece in the lot is a magnificent collar, set with diamonds, rubies, pearls and other precious stones. The value of this collar alone is placed at \$10,000. The entire collection is believed to have originally cost Mrs. Chadwick \$25,000 or more. It is stated that the customs officers have succeeded in finding a number of additional lots of jewels brought into this country by Mrs. Chadwick upon which no duty was paid. It is estimated that the officials have up to this time located not less than \$125,000 worth of such diamonds and jewelry. Those valuables were either put up as security for loans or given away by Mrs. Chadwick. It is declared that of all the great quantity of jewels brought into this country by Mrs. Chadwick, duty on less than \$11,000 worth was actually entered and paid. So far as can be learned no duty was paid on the jewels now in the possession of Henry Wuerst of Elyria. A customs inspector recently made a thorough examination of the latter property."

REFERRING to the speech delivered by Mr. Bryan at Lafayette, Ind., the Dubuque, Iowa, Telegraph says: "In other words Mr. Bryan would have the federal government own the railroads doing an interstate business and have the several states own the railroads doing business only locally, within their own boundaries. This assuredly, would relieve some of the tension of centralization. However strongly one may believe in the individualism of Jefferson and however much he may in principle be opposed to the centralization of power and to the government's encroachment in a field of business that should be left to the individual who will operate public franchises for the public benefit on the most favorable terms, the fact stands that when these terms are no longer determined by competition, but are dictated by a group of a few men who are buttressed in federal and state courts, in the national congress and the state legislatures, protection of our very liberties, endangered by corruption, demand that we wipe out the evil. Experience has demonstrated that we can not hope successfully to regulate the railroads. The one means of ending the abuses of freight rates, of corruption of the legislatures, the courts and politics is for the government to take over the railroads. We must come to that some day and he is blind indeed who does not discern the irresistible onrush."

SOME recently published statistics show that the owners of the coal supply have, according to the Washington Post, been making deals that "make Mrs. Chadwick's efforts look amateurish, and which are perfectly safe and devoid of risk." The Post explains: "At the most conservative estimate the consumers are to be asked to contribute \$8,000,000 or \$10,000,000 to the coal combine, above all questions of cost or ordinary profit. The statistics from an authentic source,