

# CURRENT TOPICS

**J**OHAN C. McCALL, secretary of the New York Life Insurance company, has returned from Europe bearing with him a statement made by Andrew Hamilton, whose name figured conspicuously during the insurance investigation. Hamilton was a lobbyist. The testimony before the insurance committee disclosed that he was in the pay of seven of the nine insurance companies investigated. Having been requested to produce his checks, Hamilton says that there are no checks to produce, and he candidly explains that payment by check would necessarily disclose the fact that the person receiving the check was under a retainer "and would thus have necessarily hampered that portion of the work that was most efficacious, namely, absolute secrecy." He says that even if he had the checks he would not produce them because "the demand for them would not be a fair and an honest one." Hamilton is very particular on questions of honesty. He says that the understanding that he had undertaken this work was "distinct and thorough."

**H**AMILTON CLAIMS that the work he did was necessary to protect life insurance companies from blackmail; that at the capital of every state he retained representatives for the company or worked "in co-operation with some one who had retained representatives duly influential." Hamilton further says: "Where it becomes necessary we have often occasion to employ the columns of the public press for the advocacy of our views. This method has been found to be very efficacious, but it has also been found to be very expensive." Hamilton says that from 1899 to 1905 he received \$720,000. In 1904 he paid out \$83,000 for "retainers and newspaper articles," and under the same heading paid out \$97,000 in 1905. Concerning the \$235,000 charged against him by the New York Life, Hamilton says that his expenses and expenditures for 1904 and 1905 are to be deducted from this amount. He says that he is willing, however, "as an evidence of good faith" and pending a settlement of these amounts, to place in the company's custody \$100,000 which it may hold and which is to be repaid in whole or in part as may appear by future audit.

**H**AMILTON DECLARES that the tax measures he has defeated have saved the New York Life Insurance company more than \$2,500,000. He takes pains to say "I want it thoroughly understood that not one dollar ever paid to me by the New York Life Insurance company has been used in a way that transgressed either the statutory law or the moral law." Does this apply to the moneys paid to Hamilton by the six other companies? And if so, why is this lobbyist so averse to a frank statement of the expenditure of the enormous sums intrusted to his care? He expects men to believe that his work was legitimate in the face of the fact that his transactions were so questionable that "absolute secrecy" was necessary not only while that work was being carried on, but now after it has been accomplished. He will not return to America—not just now. He prefers the climate of Paris and presents his physician's certificate to show that his physical condition is not the best.

**H**EARTY, OLD-FASHIONED graft is, according to a New York dispatch to the Denver News, indicated by a shipment made December 21, by the canal commission. In this shipment were tea-sets, suit-cases, imported quadruple silver-plated cutlery, tooth picks, cut glass finger bowls, and other evidences of Broadway luxuries. According to the News correspondent, among the supplies purchased with public money were the following: Thirty-six work tables for ladies. One hundred dozen high, best quality, latest style gentlemen's collars. One hundred dozen turn down, latest style gentlemen's collars, best. One hundred dozen various styles, best quality gentlemen's collars. Six dozen best silk pocket handkerchiefs for gentlemen. One thousand pairs best tan sewed shoes for gentlemen, and 1,000 pairs best colored leather shoes. One thousand gentlemen's best suit-cases. Quantity of Rogers' best quality table cutlery, quadruple silver plated. Dessert, table and silver spoons of best quality. Case of 5 o'clock tea-sets. One hundred umbrellas at \$5

each. One hundred shaving sets. One hundred razors. Twenty dozen ladies' night robes. Twenty dozen dress shirts.

**A**LFRED ANDERSON, purchasing agent for the canal commission admitted that most of these goods had been purchased by him with a portion of the \$61,000,000 which the government has appropriated for the waterway. Referring to some of the supplies mentioned, Mr. Anderson said: "They are necessities for our employes down there. Take suit-cases, for example. Some of the men may desire to visit others. How are they to carry their clothes if they have no suit-cases? Then their families may wish to entertain each other. Tea-sets and cutlery are necessary, too, I think you will readily admit."

**C**ONCERNING canal supplies the News correspondent says: "The same practical and businesslike spirit that has provided these luxuries named for the colored laborers on the isthmus, and which recently imported shiploads of women relatives of those laborers from Jamaica, has forestalled practically every wish the men might express. 'Why, there is nothing in the world that you can suggest which we have not sent to Panama,' said Mr. Anderson, his face lighting up with a smile of proud satisfaction. 'You see, we have the whole purchasing work for the New York district,' he added, 'and it's mighty big, I can tell you.' 'Were all these things purchased after public advertisement for bids?' Mr. Anderson was asked. 'Well, no,' he replied. 'We endeavor to purchase everything that the canal commission needs by public advertisement, but you see I am purchasing agent for the Panama railroad, as well as for the commission. Of course, the railroad belongs to the United States government the same as the waterway does. Mr. Shonts is president of the railroad and canal commission. But we endeavor to keep the two undertakings separate. So when anything is requested from us on an emergency order, we rush out and buy it without waiting to advertise for bids.'"

**J**UDGE MURRAY F. TULEY of Chicago who died recently was known as the Nestor of the Chicago bench. He was first elected to the circuit bench in 1879. The term for which he was last elected would have expired in 1909. He was born in Louisville, Ky., in 1827. Judge Tuley was an ardent democrat, and he it was who suggested that Edward F. Dunne be nominated for mayor. Personally he was very popular, while as a lawyer and a judge he ranked among the foremost in the history of this country.

**R**EFERRING TO THE Walsh failure, the Chicago Tribune says: "The federal and Illinois authorities have been working hand in hand for the last three days. It was only by joint investigation that the bankruptcy of the institutions was proven. Prior to this, when the federal authorities made their investigation of Mr. Walsh's national bank, the securities of the Home Savings bank were juggled and made to appear as assets of the national institution. When the state sleuths examined the Home Savings bank somebody hopped from one side of the room to the other and returned with the stocks and bonds belonging to the federal bank. The authorities, it is believed, will have the widest latitude in prosecuting Mr. Walsh, as investigation shows that nearly every law on the statute books, placed there for the safe conduct of banking business, has been violated by him with reckless impunity. John R. Walsh's banks were not banks. They were simply a huge cash drawer for his side lines of railroads, mines, stone quarries and other business investments. Out of the \$26,000,000 deposited in the half-way financial station maintained by Mr. Walsh \$15,000,000 was loaned by Mr. Walsh to companies privately controlled by himself."

**C.** AUGUSTUS HAVILAND has written to President Roosevelt a letter showing how municipal ownership has been a success in European cities. He cites the "Municipal Year Book," published by Edward Lloyd, Salisbury Square, London, and says that from official records of

1904 he finds that of the most important cities which have entered upon municipal ownership and operation, the following named contributions to the tax rate from profits on lighting and tramway service during that year: "Liverpool—Contributed from electric light profits, \$51,400; from tramway profits, \$160,408. Manchester—Contributed from gas profits, \$300,000; from tramway profits, \$255,000. Nottingham—Contributed from gas profits, \$103,415; from electricity, \$300,000; from tramways, \$65,000. Blackpool—Contributed from gas, \$74,535; from electricity, \$10,000; from tramways, \$2,500. Bolton—Contributed from gas, \$51,900; from electricity, \$22,500; from tramways, \$13,700. Belfast—Contributed from gas, \$102,900; from tramways, \$40,500. Halifax—Contributed from gas, \$59,500; from electricity, \$12,500. Dewsbury—Contributed from gas profits, \$26,800; from electricity, \$5,000. Leeds—Contributed from gas profits, \$150,000; from tramways, \$275,000. Salford—Contributed from gas profits, \$160,000; from electricity, \$22,500. Southport—Contributed from gas profits, \$56,250; from electricity, \$20,500. Burnley—Contributed from gas profits, \$35,500; from electricity, \$20,500. Birkenhead—Contributed from gas profits, \$30,000. Leicester—Contributed from gas profits, \$125,000. Lincoln—Contributed from gas profits, \$12,500. Nelson—Contributed from gas profits, \$20,770. Macclesfield—Contributed from gas profits, \$25,025. Oldham—Contributed from gas profits, \$45,650. Carlisle—Contributed from gas profits, \$34,845. Coventry—Contributed from gas profits, \$10,000. Darlington—Contributed from gas profits, \$42,500. Stockport—Contributed from gas profits, \$56,000. West Haven—Contributed from electricity, \$40,000. Widnes—Contributed from gas profits, \$81,000. Rochdale—Contributed from gas profits, \$65,000. Kingston Upon Hull—Contributed from tramway profits, \$57,500."

**M**EN OF ALL POLITICAL parties are taking great interest in the republican contest in New York. A Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch says: "Every indication points to a disposition on the part of the president to accept almost personal leadership of the party in the home state. Those who do not think that the president has a personal ambition say that he is building up an organization for the benefit of Mr. Elihu Root, and with the intention, eventually, of having Mr. Root the New York favorite son in the next presidential nominating convention of the republican party. Some politicians, even of his own party who are inclined to criticize the president for his recent activity and almost open avowal of sympathy with the anti-Odell element of his party in New York, hold that Mr. Roosevelt seeks a personal advantage. They accept as sincere his assertion that he will not be a candidate for a third term, but they believe that he would not be averse to coming to the United States senate as the representative of the most populous state in the union."

**T**HE PEOPLE OF Arizona are up in arms concerning the proposition of joint statehood between Arizona and New Mexico. Referring to The Commoner's suggestion that all in favor of admission of these territories unite their influence behind President Roosevelt's plan and work for its accomplishment, J. B. Pearsall, of Douglas, Arizona, says: "Your suggestion may be a good one so far as the Indian and Oklahoma territories are concerned, but conditions are entirely different as regards Arizona and New Mexico. A large majority of the people of both these territories are bitterly opposed to joint statehood, and nearly every newspaper in Arizona claims that were the matter left to a vote, 95 to 99 per cent of the voters would prefer that this territory remain as it is indefinitely rather than be linked with New Mexico. There is practically nothing in common between the people of Arizona and New Mexico. The backbone of the continent divides them, their customs are different, they do not agree politically, and there are numerous other reasons why a union would be a misalliance. However, I am not presuming to offer information to a paper that usually is so well informed on all public questions as is The Commoner, but as a reader of your paper almost since the first issue, I earnestly protest against the tacit support you are giving the president in his effort