

CURRENT TOPICS

IN HIS MESSAGE to congress in December, 1905, President Roosevelt said: "All contributions by corporations to any political committee or for any political purpose should be forbidden by law; directors should not be permitted to use stockholders' money for such purposes; and, moreover, a prohibition of this kind would be, as far as it went, an effective method of stopping the evils aimed at in corrupt practice acts. Not only should both the national and the several state legislatures forbid any officer of a corporation from using the money of the corporation in or about any election, but they should also forbid such use of money in connection with any legislation save by the employment of counsel in public manner for distinctly legal services." Several bills along this line were introduced, but they failed to pass.

UNDER DATE OF London, July 5, the New York World prints the following cablegram: "The Daily Express gives the following description of the meeting of J. Pierpont Morgan and W. J. Bryan at Ambassador Reid's Fourth of July reception. It is said that they had never met before: 'Mr. Morgan was standing near the doorway when a mutual friend advanced with Mr. Bryan in tow, and, with a smile said: "Mr. Morgan, this is Mr. Bryan." The great maker of combines looked at the great advocate of no monopolies and, with a faint smile, said dryly: "Bryan? Bryan? The name sounds familiar, but I have not had the pleasure of meeting you before." While their friends all around laughed at the joke, the two men shook hands. They looked at each other very narrowly as their hands met, and as soon as they had shaken they drifted apart and no conversation took place between them.'"

GREAT INTEREST is being manifested in Walter Wellman's polar expedition, which is to be made under the auspices of the Chicago Record-Herald. It will be Mr. Wellman's second attempt to reach the North Pole, and unusual preparations have been made. The chief reliance will be placed upon an airship especially built for this service. Mr. Wellman is now at Tromsø, where the ship Frithjof is being used to carry material to Spitzbergen, where houses, machine shops and sheds are being erected as a base for the expedition. In addition to using a dirigible balloon Mr. Wellman has equipped himself with a specially constructed automobile or motorcycle calculated for use over ice fields. The party will penetrate as far north as possible by boat, then have recourse to the motorcycle. When that means of conveyance is no longer possible the airship will be used, and Mr. Wellman is confident that his expedition will be a success.

MR. WELLMAN'S airship expedition recalls the ill-fated attempt of Andree to reach the pole by the same method. But the Wellman airship is as far superior to the Andree machine as an express train is superior to the old emigrant wagon of the "Forty-niners." Every important invention of the aerialists who have long sought the secret of navigation of the air has been utilized, and the Wellman airship is admittedly the nearest to perfection that man has yet achieved. Every member of the party is an experienced polar traveler, and the experiences of other explorers has been seized upon to the advantage of the forthcoming expedition. Mr. Wellman is not now able to definitely set the date for starting northward, but he declares that if the present rate of progress is maintained he will be able to start before the summer is ended.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN A. SULLIVAN of Massachusetts, says: "A few days ago the republican majority in both branches of congress forced upon the country a law compelling the canal commission to purchase its supplies from American manufacturers whenever the prices of the latter were not unreasonable or extortionate. Within a week after the time that law received the president's signature the Maryland Steel company was awarded a contract for two dredges

at \$362,000 each. The foreign concern offered to build them for \$70,000 less, over 10 per cent. At that rate in the \$10,000,000 worth of supplies which will be purchased next year American trusts will overcharge us \$1,000,000, which, according to the majority in congress, will not be extortionate or unreasonable. The sale of American products in the canal zone next year will represent \$1,000,000 of plunder. The sales of American manufacturers to the people of the United States next year will surely be sixteen thousand millions, and will therefore at the same rate represent sixteen hundred millions of plunder. Not only has the tariff system destroyed equality of taxation, closed the door of industrial opportunity and practiced extortion upon our people, but it has also been and must continue to be the rotten center of an ever-widening circle of corruption. The Chicago packers paid into the republican campaign treasury the price of the duty on hides and felt safe in poisoning communities; the insurance companies of New York made contributions with which they purchased peace at Albany; the Pennsylvania railroad purchased immunity for years from the law forbidding the railroads to engage in the business of mining coal. And the ship subsidy gang will pay their money to help elect a republican congress which will pass a ship subsidy bill."

IT HAS BEEN announced that President Roosevelt will make a trip to the Isthmus of Panama and a number of newspapers point out that this will be the first occasion when a president has left the country even for a limited time. Several newspapers think Mr. Roosevelt should not make this trip. The Wall Street Journal says: "Who will be president of the United States during the days when Mr. Roosevelt will be upon the high sea? Will it be Mr. Roosevelt or Vice President Fairbanks? Much might happen in the course of a week which would call for an immediate decision of a chief executive. A war, a panic, a great strike, involving rioting and bloodshed, a terrible calamity like that of San Francisco—all these things, though improbable, are not impossible, and it is the business of the president at all times to be within call so that he might attend to these supreme emergencies."

A KALAMAZOO, MICH., dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Professor Oscar L. Triggs, formerly of the University of Chicago, is about to establish a co-operative association at Saugatuck on Lake Michigan. Triggs publishes a magazine bearing his name. Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Harbert have offered to donate a tract of land at the mouth of Kalamazoo river on the lake front, where a community of literary and artistic people under the leadership of Triggs will set up a settlement to rival Hubbard's East Aurora colony. There will be art printing offices and shops for making pottery, furniture and metal ware. Triggs hopes to establish himself at the head of the settlement this summer."

A WRITER IN THE very interesting magazine called "To-Morrow" says that the public have obtained an erroneous idea of Prof. Triggs; that to the many thousands of people Triggs is "an irresponsible, hot-headed fanatic, forever flying off into a tangent." The writer in "To-Morrow" says that this idea has been obtained from false reports made by the newspapers and that "on every possible occasion when Triggs has said something that could be exaggerated, distorted and twisted into a sensation, the newspapers have fixed it up and rushed it into print."

THE FOLLOWING are a few instances given by the writer in "To-Morrow" of the misrepresentation to which Prof. Triggs has been subjected: "Triggs was an instructor in the department of English Literature in the University of Chicago. He made the statement to one of his classes that many of our hymns are mere doggerel, that God does not care to be praised by the singing of 'O to be nothing, O to be nothing.' Within a week thousands of people had it

from the newspapers that Triggs had said that all hymns are doggerel. Triggs explained to one of his classes that according to our modern standards, Rockefeller is a greater man than Shakespeare, that in sheer bigness, scope of interest, comprehension, the commercial genius of Rockefeller is equal to the dramatic genius of the bard of Avon. What happened? All over the country people were hearing that a university professor had said that Rockefeller is a greater man than Shakespeare. Tired reformers with sad eyes on the morals of the world denounced Triggs for a worshipper of Mammon. Meanwhile, the misrepresented professor went on speaking his thought. He ventured again. He said that Longfellow is essentially a house-poet, that he sat in his library and imagined the sting of the rain on his face. He offered it as his opinion that Walt Whitman is 'the greatest of out-door poets, that 'The Song of the Open Road' is one of the most free and sublime interpretations of Nature ever put into ink. At this, the lovers of Longfellow shed bitter tears and literary editors performed paragraphic horrors of astonishment. S. E. Kiser, a Chicago funny-man, every day for a month ran a deadly parallel, balderdash from Whitman and melody from Longfellow, intended to refute Triggs' aspersion."

J. N. FREE popularly known as the "immortal J. N.," noted as a traveler and for his eccentricities, died in the asylum for the insane at Toledo, Ohio. The Toledo correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says: "Free had been crazy for years. A long time ago he used to lecture, and it was said of him that during his peregrinations he paid neither hotel nor railway bills. Free was an Illinois man and had been educated for the bar. For a time he had a brilliant success, but lost his reason in a peculiar manner. He had been retained as counsel for a man accused of murder and took the deepest interest in the case, being satisfied that his client was innocent. During the course of the trial Free was unusually wrought up and made a remarkable plea to the jury, the result being a verdict of 'not guilty.' Free retired to his home to rest for a few days, and was there visited by the man whose life he had saved. The man coolly confessed that he was guilty of the crime as charged against him. Free was amazed. He started up and hurried back to the court, where he found the judge engaged in another trial. 'Your honor,' ejaculated the excited attorney, but he got no further and fell to the floor in an attack of apoplexy. When he recovered his mind was clouded and he never regained control of his mental faculties. Then he began traveling and lecturing, his subject being 'Pressure,' and he used to make astonishing declarations as to the happiness of the people being menaced. He was a constant visitor to newspaper offices, but generally was welcome owing to his genial manners. His life mostly was passed on the various transportation lines, but his odd stories and quaint dress made him popular everywhere. Among Free's other traits was that of generosity. He was always ready to share his belongings with anybody whom he thought to be in distress."

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald presents the following summary of Senator LaFollette's record during his brief stay in Washington: "Exposed and stopped the sale and leasing of coal and asphalt lands in Indian Territory. Led in the fight which prevented making final the records of the Dawes commission and compelled the extension of tribal relations of the five civilized tribes until a full investigation of the Indian Territory 'graft' could be made. Delivered a most exhaustive speech on rate legislation, pointing out the deficiencies of the bill as passed. Spoke for three days. Fought strenuously to strengthen the rate bill. Every amendment he offered was voted down or laid on the table by republican senators. He compelled the senate, however, to take a record vote on a number of important amendments. Introduced and forced the passage of a separate railroad bill, defining the liability of common carriers to their employes in cases of injury caused by negligence of fellow employes.