

CURRENT TOPICS

GOVERNOR CUMMINS of Iowa has declared in favor of Mr. Roosevelt's nomination. He says Mr. Roosevelt is bound to accept. Adding: "I believe we'll have a red hot fight, and because I believe the contest will be severe I am for Roosevelt. One of the first reasons that I am for Roosevelt is that he is more likely to be elected than any man we could nominate. Tariff revision will be involved. I hope the next convention will take it up by declaring for tariff revision and a broader application of reciprocity. That's one of the things I am working for."

IN THE ARCHIVES of the Pennsylvania railroad has been found a letter from James Buchanan, written when he was president of the United States, declining an offer of a free pass on the Northern Central railroad. The letter came into the possession of the Pennsylvania railroad when that road acquired control of the Northern Central. The letter as given by the Philadelphia correspondent for the New York World follows: "Washington, 24 March, 1859.

—Dear Sir: I return the free ticket which Mr. Gittings has directed to be forwarded to me for the Northern Central railroad with as many thanks for his kindness as though I had accepted. It has been the practice of my life not to travel free on any railroad, being opposed to the whole system of granting such privileges to individuals not connected with these roads. Your, very respectfully, James Buchanan; Robert S. Hollins, Esq., Secretary."

AJULY FOURTH message from New York by the Associated Press was to this effect: "A brief message from William J. Bryan was one of the features of the celebration of the Fourth of July of the Tammany society today. Mr. Bryan was one of the guests invited to help the society celebrate, but was unable to attend and sent a message from Lincoln, in which he said: 'I trust your celebration will increase the enthusiasm of the New York democracy and direct attention to the fact that the economic questions now before the country—the trust question, the tariff question and the railroad question—all involve the same issue, viz: Whether the government shall be administered in the interest of a few favorites or in behalf of the whole people. Other questions will enter into the campaign, but these questions emphasize the importance of applying to the government the Jeffersonian doctrine of 'equal rights to all and special privileges to none.' William J. Bryan.' The Tammany exercises consisted of the reading of the Declaration of Independence and speeches by Congressmen Bourke Cockran of New York, Henry L. Rainey of Illinois and James M. Brinson of Colorado."

IN AN AUCTION sale in Philadelphia recently where the Matthew A. Stickney collection of rare coins was disposed of, a silver dollar of 1804 brought the sum of \$3,600, and thereby hangs an interesting tale which is told by the Wheeling (W. Va.) Register: "This particular coin, of which there are only six known to be in existence, was purchased by a Parisian collector, in 1874, for the sum of five francs—a little over a dollar. It was passed along to a Berlin collector, where it changed hands, in 1885, for \$200. It was then brought to this country by Mr. Dunham, of Chicago, who paid \$1,000 for it. That gentleman passed it along, always at an advanced price, until it came into the possession of Mr. Stickney, who frequently refused offers of \$3,500 for it. Finally it passed under the hammer, and brought \$3,600, as stated. It would now probably command in excess of \$4,500, even at auction, for it is the only coin of the denomination and year, open to even the purchasing power of gold. Of the six known to be in existence, three are in great public museums, and two are in the hands of wealthy private collectors. There is a story about the scarcity of this particular silver coin which is worth repeating. It is to the effect that at the time of the troubles with the Barbary States, of North Africa, many tens of thousands of the 1804 silver dollars were placed on board one of the American ships of war for the payment

of the crew. Through some misfortune, as the story goes, these dollars were lost overboard, and now remain in repose at the bottom of the sea on the southern side of the Mediterranean. And every one of them would under present condition, bring at least \$500, making due allowance for the recovery of only a portion of the treasure. At the Philadelphia sale under consideration, gold coins of the United States brought these prices:

Gold eagle, 1804.....	\$ 42.00
Half eagle, 1807.....	250.00
Half eagle, 1821.....	560.00
Half eagle, 1821.....	200.00
Half eagle, 1824.....	120.00
Half eagle, 1827.....	350.00
Half eagle, 1828.....	360.00
Half eagle, 1829.....	360.00
Quarter eagle, 1797.....	200.00
Quarter eagle, 1826.....	165.00
Quarter eagle, 1834.....	320.00
Dollar, 1794.....	190.00

IN THE HAYWOOD case at Boise, Idaho, the defense introduced a large number of witnesses who denied details of the stories told by Orchard. Eugene Englee, former attorney general for Colorado, testified that Orchard had told him of the loss of a rich share in the Hercules mine and of his intention to kill Steunenberg. Englee told at great length how the military authorities at Cripple Creek defied the process of the civil courts, how he was himself deported from Telluride, where he went as counsel for the federation, and how he was later deported from Cripple Creek the day the mob destroyed the union store at Goldfield. His entry into extended descriptions and minute details brought repeated objections from the prosecution and finally the judge intervened to limit him to the material facts to save the time of the court and jury. The defense also produced Thomas C. Foster, now a bartender of Bisbee, Ariz., and who as a union miner was tried and acquitted at Cripple Creek on the charge that he had attempted to wreck a train on the Florence & Cripple Creek railroad. Foster told of his experience in the "bulldog," an attempt of Detectives D. C. Scott and H. C. Sterling to force a confession from him, which was followed by seventeen days' solitary confinement and his final flight from the district, when he walked thirty miles and fasted for over thirty hours.

GOVERNOR HUGHES of New York has selected ten men who are to comprise the public utilities commissioners and are to have jurisdiction over the street railways, steam railroads, gas and electric companies. The new commissioners are as follows: First district (Greater New York), William R. Wilcox, of Manhattan, chairman; William McCarroll, of Brooklyn; Edward M. Bassett, of Brooklyn; Milo Roy Maltbie, of Manhattan; John E. Eustis, of the Bronx. Second district (all other counties), Frank W. Stevens, Jamestown, chairman; Charles Hallam Keep, of Buffalo; Thomas Mott Osborne, of Auburn; James E. Sague, of New Hamburg; Martin S. Decker, of New Paltz. Referring to these appointees the New York World says: "Seven of these are republicans, three are democrats. Of the seven republicans only one, possibly two, can be called organization men. Not one of the ten is a regular politician. Six of the ten are lawyers, three are business men, one is a corporation investigator. The salary of each commissioner is \$15,000 a year."

THESPOWERS of New York's utilities commission are described by the World in this way: "The state utilities commission, which was appointed yesterday and will begin work Monday, has these powers: To regulate and control all railroads, street railways, gas and electric lighting companies; it can compel all transportation corporations to give safe and adequate service at just and reasonable rates; it can prevent rebates and discrimination in rates between different classes of shippers, or passengers, or kinds of traffic; it can compel all common carriers to furnish sufficient cars and

motive power to meet all the requirements of the public both as to passengers and freight; the utilities commission law provides against the giving of free passes except in a few limited instances; no franchise shall be capitalized in excess of the amount actually paid to the state for the franchise; the capital stock of a corporation formed by merger shall not exceed the sum of the capital stock of the consolidated companies; no corporation shall purchase or hold stock in another common carrier corporation unless authorized by the commission."

A NEW YORK reader writes to the Houston (Texas) Post as follows: "In reference to your leading editorial entitled 'A Spectacle for Japan,' I would like to relate an incident which ought to dispel some of your skepticism of Japan's designs on us. A few days ago I accidentally made the acquaintance of a Japanese gentleman in a Sixth avenue elevated train. He spoke English fluently, seemed to be well educated and impressed me as knowing a great deal about naval matters—so much that I now suspect he was a former naval officer. Our conversation turned to the possibility of war between Japan and the United States, and he took no pains to conceal his views or his knowledge. He said he believed war would come in the near future and would be begun by Japan, but only under certain unique conditions; namely, only if Japan can cripple at least half of our navy with a single blow, as she had done at Port Arthur. The Japanese naval staff was greatly disappointed when our government recently ordered home the battleships Ohio, Oregon and Wisconsin from the far east. They had hoped that our fleet there would be augmented by the addition of the five new battleships of the Virginia class and perhaps the two of the Louisiana class, making ten in all, which they believed they could destroy in a single night attack with a total 200 torpedo boats. However, the Japanese naval officers, he said, were somewhat reassured when we replaced the battleships with the four cruisers, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Maryland and West Virginia. He even went so far as to declare that plans are ready for the capture of these cruisers, the destruction of the dry dock Dewey, and the conquest of the Philippines. Further, in Japanese newspapers our admirals Dewey and Evans are likened to Russian officers and characterized as stupid and incompetent. The Russians are styled 'sea admirals,' while Evans and Dewey are called 'cabin admirals,' etc. I leave you to draw your own conclusions."

SENATOR THOMPSON of the New York assembly introduced a resolution providing for the appointment of a committee to investigate the contributions made through George B. Cortelyou to the republican campaign fund in 1904. The resolution did not pass. The Houston (Texas) Post tells the story in this way: "Senator Raines, President Roosevelt's mouthpiece in the New York legislature, imposed his objection to the consideration of the resolution and it goes to a standing committee that will promptly pigeonhole it forever. The democrats were unanimous for the resolution, but the president's closest friends were obdurate and prevented consideration. If Cortelyou's management of the Roosevelt campaign was clean as the president asserted, it seems to us that the proposed investigation would have served to forever silence the ugly allegations which have been made from time to time since Judge Parker first raised the issue during the closing days of the last presidential campaign. The corporations that contributed to the fund, the men who acted for the corporations and the politicians who represented the committee all reside in New York City, with the exception of Secretary Cortelyou. The books of the corporations are available and it would be easy to dispose of the matter once for all. Could Senator Raines possibly have represented the wishes of the president, who has spoken so strongly and so frequently on the virtue of publicity? Is it not plain that so palpable an effort to suppress the financial operations of the republican committee will be accepted by the public as a republican confession of guilt? Why can not Mr. Roose-