

# CURRENT TOPICS

**A**N ASSOCIATED Press dispatch under date of New York, December 19, says: "At a session which lasted ten minutes the republican county committee of New York county tonight, by an almost unanimous vote, refused to consider at this time a resolution indorsing Governor Charles E. Hughes for the republican presidential nomination. No sooner had the resolution been offered by the friends of the governor and its adoption moved than there came an amendment to receive and print the document and make it a special order for the regular meeting in January. This latter motion was carried with a shout that could be heard far out into the street. Immediately a motion to adjourn was carried. The action of the committee in postponing the matter was regarded as a foregone conclusion as the delegates assembled."

**R**EFERRING TO the defeat of the Hughes resolution the New York correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "That the Hughes resolution, which was introduced tonight by Harry W. Mack, republican leader in the Fifteenth assembly, where Governor Hughes made his home at the time he was elected governor, will be passed by a large majority at the January meeting, the governor's friends claimed as a certainty. Even the followers of Mr. Parsons did not gainsay this assertion, but if it passes at that time the credit will not belong to Senators Page and Saxe, who so far have been the principal Hughes boomers, and whose motives have never been questioned except by the friends of Mr. Parsons, but to the county chairman and his friends. Tonight's meeting demonstrated beyond a doubt that Mr. Parsons is in complete control of the committee. That the outcome of tonight's meeting was a black eye to Governor Hughes and his prospects for the nomination was plainly to be read in the faces of his friends on the county committee after the meeting had adjourned. They were almost unanimous in declaring that the hand of President Roosevelt rather than that of Chairman Parsons had been felt in tonight's proceedings. The fate of the Hughes' resolutions was practically settled at the meeting of the executive committee of the republican county convention, which was held this afternoon at the republican state quarters. At that meeting the course of deferring action on the resolution was decided upon by a vote among the leaders."

**U**NDER THE heading "Let Us Weep With Pity and Bow With Shame," the Appeal to Reason displays, across two columns of a recent number, this extract from a press report of the Monongah mine explosion: "They took a small boy, eleven years old, from mine No. 6 today. He bore on his grimed little face a look of peace and happiness that doubtless never marked it in life. There are other little trapper boys, they say, in the hideous catacomb back under the hills, boys that never have known the delight of tops and marbles, and whose best comrades are the slow and patient mules that haul the black cars down the drifts. The little boy taken out was a weakling, a mere child, who in life probably did not possess enough strength to lift a bushel of coal. But his small hands were gnarled and his shoes were those of a man laborer, rough and tough and hobnailed."

**R**EPRODUCING THE extract from the Appeal to Reason the Omaha World-Herald prints this remarkably strong editorial: "The heading seemed hysterical and a bit ridiculous at first glance. But no honest man with a spark of that heavenly compassion in his heart which Charles Dickens invoked for 'Little Joe' can read this bit of news without admitting that the heading is excused. Christian men and women should weep with pity and bow their heads with shame. For this puny little eleven-year-old miner, with gnarled hands and hobnailed shoes; this child robbed of his childhood; taken from the sunlight and the fields and

streams and forests while yet a baby and plunged into this coal mine there to suffer and die; this little miner was their slave. In their service he lived and died, and all he has to show for what our Christian civilization has given him in return for what he gave is his stunted soul and starved body and his grimy face upturned to the sky. Dickens' 'Little Joe,' the English waif whose forlorn condition so touched the great heart of the novelist, was a prince, a pampered and favored child of fortune, compared with this dead little American miner of a half-century later. A half-century of progress and this is what we have to show for it! Is it strange socialism grows; socialism, which hurls its challenge in the face of the system that has given us this sorry product? Is it strange that, despite its fundamental fallacies, it appeals to the fathers and mothers of the poor when it can launch, with justice, the terrific indictment against a 'capitalist' civilization that 'the march of its conquest is stained with the blood of infants and paved with the puny bones of children?' People were poor enough, God knows, in the dark ages of medieval ignorance and in the still earlier days of paganism; but never, till modern industrialism joined hands with Christian civilization, did they have to send their children to work as children are sent today. Ancient greed held its hand in pity or shame, and spared the child. The greed of today knows neither shame nor pity and in children it finds succulent morsels."

**A** CONTEST BETWEEN Nebraska republicans is on. It is Taft against LaFollette. One Taft supporter wrote to the Lincoln Journal insisting that Mr. Taft should be nominated because he is "a fearless fighter against predatory wealth and corporation aggression;" also that "there is no question as to his (Taft's) position upon every point in what we have come to recognize as the Roosevelt policy." Frank A. Harrison, the LaFollette leader in Nebraska, has propounded to this particular Taft boomer these questions: "When did Mr. Taft declare his position on the policies now before the country? When did he make this 'fearless fight against predatory wealth and corporate aggression?' Surely Dr. Ely did not receive this information by the process of mental telepathy. If Mr. Taft's chief recommendation is that he is indorsed by Roosevelt, then by the same reasoning are not Paul Morton and the minister to Mexico also 'fearless fighters against corporate aggression?' And isn't it just possible that Roosevelt is a better judge of policies than he is of men? Shouldn't the Taft tub stand on its own bottom?"

**A** PERSONAL encounter occurred December 19 on the floor of the house of representatives. An Associated Press dispatch from Washington tells the story in this way: "John Sharp Williams of Mississippi, leader of the minority, and Representative David A. De Armond of Missouri engaged in a fist fight over the passing of the lie on the floor of the house this afternoon immediately after adjournment at 2.10. Mr. Williams struck the first blow and Mr. De Armond retaliated vigorously with clenched fists. When the combatants were separated blood was flowing down Mr. Williams' face from a small gash in the left cheek and his forehead was red and abraded. Mr. De Armond bore no mark of the fray. The encounter was witnessed by more than one hundred members of the house and by as many more persons in the galleries, among them a number of women. The house having just broken up, groups of representatives were standing or sitting about discussing the committee appointments that had been announced by the speaker. Among them were Mr. Williams, seated at Representative Wallace's desk on the center aisle of the democratic side and Mr. De Armond who occupied Representative Bartlett's desk adjoining. They were engaged in very earnest talk but their voices were low and they attracted no especial attention. Suddenly both men sprang to their feet and began striking at each other. So startled and so astounded were the members

of the house and the officials that for a moment no one offered to interfere and the leader of the minority and the member from Missouri lunged back and forth between the desks, both swaying wildly and each in apparent danger of going down. Blood was flowing from a gash in Mr. Williams' cheek when Assistant Sergeant-at-arms Sinnot sprang between them, grasped Mr. De Armond and held him back while representatives and attendants, following suit, effected a separation."

**T**HE LIQUOR question came up in United States senate when Senator Tillman introduced the following resolution: "That the committee on interstate commerce be instructed to consider and report by bill or otherwise what legislation is desirable or necessary to enable the states in the exercise of their police powers to control the commerce of liquors and alcoholic beverages within their borders so as to aid the cause of temperance and to prevent the encouragement by the United States government of illicit dealing in the same."

**R**EFERRING TO the Tillman resolution an Associated Press dispatch says: "Mr. Tillman said his purpose was to prevent circumvention of state prohibition laws. Said he: 'The courts have held that these laws interfere with interstate commerce. On this account I ask this investigation.' Mr. Tillman said the express companies are flooding local option southern states with whisky from other states, 'C. O. D.,' and the supreme court of the United States had held that such traffic can not be interfered with because of its interstate character. He said his resolutions ought to define the point at which the police power of the state begins and determine how far congress can go in limiting the control over interstate traffic in intoxicating beverages. A general discussion concerning the powers of states and of the federal government was precipitated. Mr. Knox suggested that the whole difficulty could be reached through a bill. 'Draw one,' suggested Mr. Tillman, whereupon Mr. Knox prepared an amendment to the Wilson law. Mr. Tillman then withdrew his resolution and offered the Knox bill, which was referred to the committee on judiciary. The bill provides that all intoxicating liquors transported into any state or territory remaining therein shall, upon arrival within the state and before or after delivery to the consignee, be subject to the laws of such state in the same manner as though such liquors had been produced in such state or territory, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced in original packages or otherwise."

**S**EVERAL Washington correspondents have reported that strained relations exist between the president and Secretary Cortelyou. It was reported that Mr. Roosevelt was very angry when he discovered an alleged scheme on the part of certain of his appointees to boom Secretary Cortelyou for the presidential nomination. Although Mr. Cortelyou has not given the public statements he seems to have found it necessary to issue under date of December 17, the following: "I do not know that I am called upon to make a statement at this time, but in view of the various rumors in circulation as to the alleged political activity of friends of mine in my interest, I will say that I have not been a candidate for anything but the confidence of the people in the discharge of my duties as secretary of the treasury. I have not in person sought nor have the friends whose names have been mentioned in this connection sought to influence political movements in my interest; I have not, nor have they, used any influence, directly or indirectly, to secure political support for or against any candidate for the presidency and accusations that such has been done are unqualifiedly false. In no office, in no one of three departments with which I have been connected, have I authorized or permitted officials or employes to attempt to influence any such movements, nor shall I do so. In common with many