

# CURRENT TOPICS

**F**RRIENDS OF Secretary Taft controlled the republican state convention which met recently at Columbus, Ohio. James R. Garfield was chosen as chairman for the state convention. The primaries will be held February 11, and the convention will meet at Columbus, March 3.

**W**ISCONSIN is the first state to call a democratic state convention for 1908. The Wisconsin convention will be held at Milwaukee, February 13. A dispatch under date of Milwaukee, December 2, says: "This was decided on tonight at a meeting of the sub-committee of the democratic state central committee, which was empowered to select the time and place of the state convention. There will be twenty-two district delegates and four delegates-at-large. The district delegates will be nominated at caucuses and ratified by the convention and delegates-at-large will be nominated by the convention. The delegates thus agreed upon in convention will go before the people at the primary elections and will be elected without opposition."

**E**VERYONE WILL be interested in this dispatch from the Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat: "The republican national convention, which assembles at noon Tuesday, June 16, will consist of 980 delegates, 491 votes being necessary to nominate. The last convention was composed of 994 delegates, but the national committee reduced the representation of the territories and the District of Columbia from six delegates to two. Oklahoma comes in with fourteen delegates. The territories will ask for representation by six delegates each, but it will rest with the convention whether they are to be ceded or not. Under the terms of the call issued by the national committee, it will be in order to hold conventions after January 7 for the selection of delegates to the national convention upon the giving of thirty days' notice. It is expected that a number of states will hold their conventions during February, and by that time there will be a practical show-down of the strength of the opposing candidates for the nomination. Practical politicians do not attach a great deal of importance to the declarations which have been made by state committees up to this time. The representation of the several states and territories in the national convention follows: Alabama 22, Arkansas 18, California 20, Colorado 10, Connecticut 14, Delaware 6, Florida 10, Georgia 26, Idaho 6, Illinois 54, Indiana 30, Iowa 26, Kansas 20, Kentucky 26, Louisiana 18, Maine 12, Maryland 16, Massachusetts 32, Michigan 28, Minnesota 22, Mississippi 20, Missouri 36, Montana 6, Nebraska 16, Nevada 6, New Hampshire 8, New Jersey 24, New York 78, North Carolina 24, North Dakota 8, Ohio 46, Oklahoma 14, Oregon 8, Pennsylvania 68, Rhode Island 8, South Carolina 18, South Dakota 8, Tennessee 24, Texas 36, Utah 6, Vermont 8, Virginia 24, Washington 10, West Virginia 14, Wisconsin 26, Wyoming 6, District of Columbia 2, Alaska 2, Arizona 2, Hawaii 2, New Mexico 2, Philippine Islands 2, Porto Rico 2. Total 980."

**F**ORMER PRESIDENT Grover Cleveland has written for the Youth's Companion an article entitled "Our People and Their Ex-Presidents." In a dispatch from New York the Associated Press gives this synopsis of Mr. Cleveland's article: "Referring to the poverty of Jefferson after he left the presidency as a blow to the national pride, Mr. Cleveland declares definite and generous provisions should be made for the maintenance of chief magistrates at the end of their terms. He discusses the subject at length and says he feels that he can do so without his sincerity being questioned, since he is beyond the need of aid from the public treasury. 'The condition is by no means met,' Mr. Cleveland writes, 'by the meager and spasmodic relief occasionally furnished under the guise of a military pension or some other pretext; nor would it be best met by making compensation dependent upon the direct charge of senatorial or other duty. Our people ought to make a

definite and generous provision for all cases alike based on motives of justice and fairness and adequate to the situation.' Continuing Mr. Cleveland writes: 'There is a sort of vague, but none the less imperative, feeling abroad in the land that one who has occupied the great office of president holds in trust for his fellow citizens a certain dignity which, in his conduct and manner of life he is bound to protect. Obedience to this obligation prescribes for him only such work as, in the popular judgment, is not undignified. This suggests without argument a reciprocal connection between the curtailment of opposition on one hand and reasonable indemnification on the other.'

**S**ENATOR William B. Allison, of Iowa, chairman of the committee on appropriations, favors action by congress looking to the care and support of ex-presidents of the United States. In an Associated Press interview he referred to the recent utterances of former President Grover Cleveland on the subject and agreed with him that some provision should be made in this direction. The matter deserved consideration at the hands of congress, he said, and undoubtedly would receive it. In the case of Thomas Jefferson, who died poor, Mr. Allison said the government would have done well to pay his debts. At present Mrs. Garfield is receiving an allowance from the government, and he said to make provision for ex-presidents would cause no considerable drain on the treasury, as rarely have there been more than two of them alive at the same time."

**R**EPUBLICAN politicians are just a little uneasy about the conduct of the colored brother in 1908. Down in Alabama they did some peculiar things. The following dispatch from Mobile explains: "Ten thousand colored people gathered today and celebrated emancipation day with a monster meeting. Rev. B. F. Wheeler was the principal speaker. The following resolutions were adopted: 'Resolved, That we, the colored people of Mobile, Ala., pledge our continual allegiance to the fearless leader and faithful champion of the third term movement in the person of Hon. Frank Hitchcock, first assistant postmaster general, and we consider Secretary of War Taft fortunate in securing such a man as Mr. Hitchcock to manage his interests in the southern states. We will now feel much more friendly in the future to the Taft movement than we have in the past.' This seems queer when it is remembered that Mr. Hitchcock is supposed to be a Cortelyou boomer rather than a Taft adherent. And so strong were his anti-administration views that he has been stripped of all power of political appointments in the postoffice department."

**A**LL OVER the country there are signs of the negro vote being crystalized. These two telegrams are interesting: "Boston, Jan. 1.—A call for a meeting of colored citizens to be held at Philadelphia on April 7, was sent out today to representative colored men all over the country by Rev. H. M. Scott, president of the Suffrage league of Boston. The call says the conference is to have special reference to demands to be made of political parties as to platforms for the next national election and to determine what candidates for the presidential nomination most deserve the support of the colored voters." "Topeka, Kan., Jan. 1.—At a meeting of negroes from over Kansas today primarily to celebrate emancipation day, a resolution was passed commending Senator J. B. Foraker and pledging support to his aspirations, whatever they may be, and calling on the negroes of the south to join in supporting him."

**W**ITH THE new year Georgia's prohibition law became effective. An Atlanta dispatch to the Sioux City (Ia.) Journal said: "The law is very drastic in its prohibition and prevents the keeping or giving away of liquors in public places, and imposes a tax of \$500 on clubs whose members are allowed to keep drinks

of an intoxicating nature in their individual lockers. There is some agitation to have the law declared unconstitutional. This action may be brought in the United States courts in the course of the next month. It was claimed today that Atlanta alone would lose in license taxes \$135,612 and that the property value of saloons and breweries here which will go out of business on January 1 is from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000. For the rest of the state the property values involved are about \$5,000,000. It is estimated that 1,000 persons will lose their employment when January 1 rings its bell on the sale of intoxicating liquors. That the prohibition law will be enforced there is no question. Governor Smith and the city court officials have been frank in their statements that they intend to enforce the laws. Many of the more prominent clubs have declared that they will go one better than the law and prohibit the keeping of liquor within their doors. The constitution of Georgia in its provision for school maintenance is very specific, according to one Atlanta lawyer. The question now arises where the funds for the maintenance of public schools will come from, and it is said that a considerable increase in the tax rate may result."

**G**OVERNOR Hoke Smith, referring to the Georgia law made to the Associated Press this statement: "There is nothing in the effort to attack the prohibition law on account of the provision of the constitution appropriating special liquor taxes to the schools. The constitution authorizes, but does not require, a special liquor tax. The concerns which quit the liquor business are not lost. The breweries are prepared to manufacture ice and soft drinks, with which they can pay a fair profit on their investments. There is plenty of work in Georgia for those who go out of the liquor business and plenty of work all the time for those who have wasted half their time through the use of liquor."

**A** MARION, Ohio, dispatch to the Washington Herald follows: "President Roosevelt was flayed as arrogant, and as guilty of 'the unpardonable sin of ingratitude.' This was in reference to his opposition to Senator J. B. Foraker, who is credited with having turned the Ohio delegation to him in 1900, over Mark Hanna's wishes. These remarks were made in an interview here this evening by William Z. Davis, the Ohio supreme court justice. Justice Davis said: 'This is not the first time in the history of the republican party that a vice president who was made president by the work of an assassin has used all the power and influence of the government to avenge himself on those who have ventured to have views of their own, and to force 'my policy' on the party of the nation. Some of us have not forgotten Andrew Johnson.' Justice Davis turned to praise Senator Foraker and slipped in a reference to the delivery of Ohio to Roosevelt and his opinion of the president's opposition to Foraker. He said: 'If my vote would make Senator Foraker president, he would be chief executive, for I believe he would be a safe and sane and big president, who would engage in no wild crusades and would administer the high office in the interest of all classes. He certainly would not be guilty of the unpardonable sin of ingratitude.'"

**A** FORMER mistress of the White House, Mrs. Letitia Tyler Semple, died recently, age eighty-six years, at the Louise home, Washington, D. C. A writer in the New York Evening Post says: "Mrs. Semple was the only surviving daughter of President Tyler. In 1839 she was married to Paymaster Semple of the navy. Owing to Mrs. Tyler's ill-health, it was necessary for some other woman of the family to represent her and to assume the social obligations of the White House. During Mr. Semple's absence on duty at sea, Mrs. Semple went to Washington to assume the place of executive hostess, remaining with her father until he married again. During the years of Mrs. Semple's residence in the White House, and throughout the Tyler regime, a Jeffersonian