

# CURRENT TOPICS

REFERRING TO the New York World's boom for Governor Johnson of Minnesota, the New York Sun says: "What we know of Mr. Johnson is very favorable. He is fresh, clean, enthusiastic and strong, yet impressionable. At the least he does not lecture and attempt to dominate. It is very evident that, with his own ideas quite clear within him, he would nevertheless permit the legislative and judiciary departments of the government to attend to their own affairs and not molest them with criticisms and importunities. Johnson is only a possibility, of course. Bryan is not even that."

THE BUFFALO (N. Y.) Times says: "In its opposition to Mr. Bryan the New York World is in the company of the Standard Oil trust, the railroad trust, the sugar trust, the leather trust, the insurance trust, the paper trust, the tobacco trust, and all other trusts which are preying upon the people through their pull with legislatures. It is in the company of the frenzied financiers and stock gamblers of Wall Street. It is in the company of all the predatory corporations which infest the country. All of these interests are opposed to Mr. Bryan. They are doing all they can to eliminate him as a candidate and accomplish the nomination of some man who would be their willing tool. The plunderers of the people know that with Mr. Bryan in the presidency they would receive no quarter. Their hope is that with a 'conservative' in the chair they would be allowed to ply their traffic at will. It is very bad company for the World to be in."

THE NEW YORK Herald (rep.) a newspaper that is supporting Governor Hughes for the nomination for president, says that the great majority of the New York state committeemen, who endorsed Hughes Saturday, "with the greatest emphasis expressed the opinion in private conversation that President Roosevelt is the only living republican who can carry the state next fall against William J. Bryan." It adds that "the remarkable condition existed of Roosevelt republicans and anti-Roosevelt republicans alike uniting in the view that the situation in the state was just as bad as it could be, and that it is time to prepare for squalls." Referring to the above the Omaha World-Herald says: "This is the opinion that has already been publicly given by Seth Low, General Woodruff, and other prominent leaders of New York republicanism."

THE TAFT press bureau at Columbus, O., recently sent out, according to the Washington Herald, printed slips bearing these headlines: "Business Hope Lies on Taft," "Assert Taft is Best Candidate," "Big Wall Street House Calls on Financial Interests to Assist in Nomination." Following are extracts from the Taft circular: "Mr. Taft's long record is distinctly against any conclusion that he would continue Mr. Roosevelt's methods. He has displayed brains, ability, good judgment, and, above all, sanity, in the great and successful accomplishments of his career. We must not lose sight of the fact that there is a temperamental difference in the two men, Roosevelt and Taft. By nature and by training, as a lawyer and as a judge, Mr. Taft has always manifested a thoughtful attitude in his judgment, and a great deliberation and conservatism in his actions. Neither is it conceivable that a man of his force of character would be controlled, when in the full power of the presidency, by any outside personality."

REFERRING TO the Taft circulars the Washington Herald says: "The intention obviously is to quiet any business fears regarding Taft as the heir apparent of an administration whose policies have been bitterly resented in Wall street. Emphasis is put upon Taft's calm, judicial temperament in contrast with Roosevelt's impulsiveness. This remarkable press bureau sheet—remarkable in that the text as a whole is in distinct disparagement of Roosevelt, and quotes utterances decidedly uncomplimentary to the president—is made up of three

newspaper articles. The first is credited to the Los Angeles Times, and is an interview with Isaiah W. Hellman, Pacific coast banker, in which he strongly advocates Taft's nomination, and urges the business world to support him. 'If we don't get Taft,' he says, 'there is very great danger that Bryan may at last break into the presidency.' He predicts that if Taft is nominated at Chicago, 'you will see an immediate improvement in business.' The second press bureau article is an editorial quotation from the Wall Street Journal (date February 29), which says that Wall Street has suddenly awakened to the belief that Taft is to be the next republican candidate for president, and that 'in spite of the fact that he is Roosevelt's own candidate, picked out by the president a year ago, and that he indorses the president's policies in every public address, he, nevertheless, possesses many attractive qualities as a statesman.' The Wall Street Journal then proceeds to emphasize Taft's possession of 'judicial and diplomatic qualities.'

THE THIRD and last article on this Taft press bureau sheet is a dispatch from New York, February 29, to the Ohio State Journal, which asserts that the financial interests of the country, "and Wall Street in particular," are "preparing to line up behind William H. Taft for president." Then follows the announcement that the Wall Street house of J. S. Bache & Co., one of the oldest in the street, and among the best known on the New York stock exchange, had "come out for Mr. Taft" in their weekly financial letter. The Washington Herald adds: "The press bureau gives to the world this letter evidently not only with approval, but jubilation, and it is therein that the quotations used at the head of this article are to be found. Messrs J. S. Bache & Co., through the medium of the Taft bureau, which copies the financial letter, reassure the business world. They make a distinct differentiation between the policies advocated by Mr. Roosevelt and the methods employed by him. 'These financial interests,' they say, 'sore from the slaughter produced by Mr. Roosevelt's methods, have looked with distrust upon Mr. Taft as the heir not only of the Roosevelt policies, but also of the Roosevelt methods. From information that we have received, we now believe that this is a mistake.' Then the Wall Street firm proceeds to disclose that Taft has 'brains' and 'sanity,' and, while he would carry out the Roosevelt policies, his long record is 'distinctly against any conclusion that he would continue Mr. Roosevelt's methods.' The Wall Street view of President Roosevelt is not new. It is a novelty of the republican campaign, however, to find the Taft press bureau using this unfriendly Wall Street view of the president to exploit the president's candidate."

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the New York Herald (rep.) says: "There is to be noted a growing feeling of discouragement on the part of republicans generally at the national capital as to whether the candidate to be nominated at Chicago will win. As Taft sweeps through 'the enemy's country,' picking up delegates here and there, it is evident that even some of his warmest supporters are getting in a state of what might be classed as 'blue funk.' On the other hand it is evident that some of his opponents are somewhat relaxing their efforts because they do not think that the party can make a winning fight unless the situation is changed." The dispatch then goes on to outline the troubles under which Mr. Taft labors, and winds up with this frank admission: "But what more than the troubles of Secretary Taft is exerting a disheartening influence on the party managers is apparently their incapacity to grapple with matters of pressing importance. They find themselves on the heels of a money crisis unable to pass quickly a simple measure of financial relief for an emergency currency. They find themselves unable to reach any agreement which will enable them to pass any legislation which will meet the insistent demands of labor, and they find themselves with congress and the president divided. This growing ten-

dency on the part of the leaders to separate and grapple each other's throats, instead of vexing party problems, is the important development of a situation in which the favorite of the president seems to be much more than holding his own." The Omaha World-Herald adds: "All this, of course, is only the beginning of the trouble. It is assured that there will be more than 200 contested seats in the national convention, and the probabilities are that the settlement of these contests will determine the nominee, and the control of the convention. This means scandal, bad blood and factional strife. In every state the republican party is a house divided against itself, worse even than was the democratic party in 1896."

IN ITS ISSUE of March 9 the Washington Herald printed the following interview with General Keifer, former speaker of the house of representatives and now a representative from Ohio: "I am a delegate to the national convention from my state. I am a Taft man and shall strictly follow my instructions and use my influence to nominate and elect Taft. Taft has probably made some enemies because of his Roosevelt affiliation, and also because people have an idea he would too closely follow Roosevelt's ideas when elected. I don't believe, however, he will. Taft is a man of independence of thought and moral courage to uphold his independence. I would vote for Fairbanks if he were nominated. He is an excellent man, and has the confidence of the people. Shaw is also a good man. What has become of Cortelyou's boom, I wonder? Taft, I am afraid, will have a pretty hard time of it to satisfy the people after the strenuous administration of Roosevelt. Many people applaud Roosevelt when he jumps up and makes a speech or some other noise. They're under the impression he is doing things. But Taft will gain the confidence of the people if only given a fair chance."

WALTER WELLMAN, Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says that at a private gathering recently Mr. Roosevelt said: "Considered from the standpoint of purely intellectual equipment Elihu Root is undoubtedly the greatest man we have in public life today. But for all-round strength, for ability to deal with men as well as with questions, as a worker and result-getter, William H. Taft is the biggest going concern in the country."

THE AWFUL charge is now made that at the recent session of the Ohio republican convention Messrs. Roosevelt and Taft aided by Congressman Burton "tried to insert a real democratic tariff plank in a republican platform." General J. Warren Keifer, a standpatter, is credited with having foiled the attempt. The story is told by the Washington correspondent for the Omaha World-Herald in this way: "The story of this plank offered by Mr. Burton will be used in the effort to scare orthodox protection republicans away from Taft. The standpat tariff men are fighting him now. The American Economist, organ of the American protective tariff league, is crying, 'Help, police,' against Taft in every issue. The charge put out tonight is that Mr. Burton, with the approval of Roosevelt and the Roosevelt candidate, tried to have the Ohio platform charge the tariff with fostering monopolies and trusts. Bryan never had unkind words than these for the Dingley and McKinley laws, so the republican reactionaries say. The Ohio platform's history began in conferences held here in which the president, Secretary Taft, Congressman Burton, Secretary Garfield and Attorney General Wade H. Ellis took part. When the rough draft they completed was turned over to the convention committee on resolutions at Columbus that committee struggled with it for a bit, according to the dispatches, and then turned the problem over to a sub-committee of which Mr. Burton was chairman, and several Ohio congressmen members; General J. Warren Keifer was one of these. The platform, as adopted, had this