

# CURRENT TOPICS

WRITING IN THE Saturday Evening Post, Bailey Millard tells how the big thief escapes. He says: "In New York, as is shown by the records of District Attorney Jerome's office, the big thief nearly always goes free. Of 3,274 cases of grand larceny—under which head come the embezzlements—in the years 1905 and 1906 there were only three cases of conviction in which the sum named in the records was \$50,000 or over. The great mass of the other convictions was for the stealing of sums ranging from \$100 to \$1,000. Your big thief, even where the law lays its hands upon him, gets off; your little thief is likely to go to jail. But even the little offenders' chances are good—better than two to one. For of 11,037 cases of grand larceny reported by the chief clerk of the district attorney of New York for the seven years ended December 31, 1906, there were 6,637 cases acquitted, discharged or dismissed, and there were only 4,400 convictions. The fact that there have been a few more convictions for embezzlement in 1907 than in the previous year in nearly all the large cities is merely the result of there having been a much greater number of embezzlements, and does not mark a growing tendency to prosecute, as some misinformed writers seem to think."

BEFORE ADOPTING a special rule which provides for considering and passing the sundry civil appropriation bill, after eight hours' general debate, the house April 27, listened to Mr. Williams, the minority leader, in an explanation of the filibuster he is conducting. The filibuster, he said, will end the moment the house gives permission for the consideration of the campaign publicity bill; a bill to put wood pulp and print paper on the free list and the anti-injunction bill. These measures, Mr. Williams insisted, were all a part of the president's legislative program. Every roll call which was taken was only an emphasis, which the country understood, to the lack of action by the republican majority. The filibuster, Mr. Williams said in conclusion, would continue until the desired results were accomplished. That it was not delaying business was evidenced by the fact that supply bills were now further along than usual at this time in a long session.

THE COMPLETION of one hundred years of Catholicism in New York was celebrated April 28 in St. Patrick's cathedral, New York City, with impressive services. A New York dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Six thousand worshippers thronged the cathedral and thousands more stood outside, content, since they could not gain entrance, to cheer and bow in prayer as they watched the greatest procession of Roman Catholic church dignitaries assembled in America in many years. It was a service of thanksgiving, blessed by Pope Pius X. through his special representative, Mgr. Falconio, and graced by a personal message from his holiness. The service was in the form of a pontifical mass, the celebrant, Cardinal Logue, primate of Ireland, who said in addressing the vast congregation: 'The church and religion have made the most wonderful progress here. It is a fine commentary upon the faith which we profess that it should be so, and our church has shown again the clear adaptation of which it is capable. Here, in a republican form of government, the church is a live, a very live, organization, forging ahead. I truly think that the progress of the church in America under the republican form of government is just another mark of her universality and adaptability, as well as being one of the greatest religious movements of modern times.'"

MR. ROOSEVELT'S four battleship plan was defeated in the senate. Senator Beveridge of Indiana led the fight for the president. Twenty-three votes were cast for the increased program, the number largely being made up of recently elected senators. Fifty senators voted to support the house and the recommendation

of the senate naval committee in favor of building only two battleships. The roll call on the Piles amendment follows: Yeas—Ankley, Beveridge, Borah, Bourne, Briggs, Brown, Burkett, Dupont, Flint, Fulton, Gamble, Hansbrough, Heyburn, Lodge, McCreary, Owen, Paynter, Piles, Smith (Mich.), Smoot, Southerland, Taylor, Warner—23. Nays—Aldrich, Bacon, Bankhead, Brandegee, Berkeley, Burnham, Burrows, Carter, Clapp, Clarke (Wyo.), Clay, Crane, Culberson, Cullom, Curtis, Daniel, Davis, Dick, Dillingham, Dixon, Foraker, Frazier, Frye, Gallinger, Gray, Gore, Guggenheim, Hale, Hemenway, Johnson, Kean, Long, McCumber, Money, Nelson, Newlands, Nixon, Overman, Perkins, Platt, Richardson, Simmons, Stephenson, Stewart, Stone, Taliaferro, Teller, Warner, Wetmore—50. Of the democrats, only four—Messrs. McCreary, Owen, Paynter and Taylor, voted for the four battleship program. Pairs were recorded as follows: Messrs. Elkins and Bailey, Allison and Clarke (Ark.), Depew and McEnery, Scott and McLaurin, Penrose and Martin, Dolliver and Raynor, Milton and Tillman and Knox and Hopkins. Three senators, Messrs. Kittridge, Smith (Md.) and LaFollette did not vote and were not paired. As finally passed the bill carries appropriations aggregating \$123,115,659, and provides for the construction of two battleships and two colliers and the purchase of three additional colliers, the construction of submarines and other necessary craft, and increases the pay of officers and enlisted men, as well as increasing both the pay and the strength of the marine corps.

IN AN EDITORIAL printed in the Louisville Courier-Journal and entitled "The Political Outlook," Henry Watterson says: "The time has passed for 'some one else,' Mr. Bryan retaining the field; it is too late for 'some one else,' the conditions what they are; and I confess that I am in sympathy with Mr. Bryan in refusing to be ruled off the track by a group of New York politicians, whose motives are, to say the least of them, suspicious, which will support no ticket except one framed by themselves, and which do not agree with one another touching the ticket to be named. Whatever his claims may be, or may not be, Mr. Bryan has his rights, and no thoughtful man can, or will say, that he can not be elected, the ipse dixit equally of the unthinking, the interested and the prejudiced to the contrary being of no weight whatever. But among democrats, who know why they are democrats, there ought to be other and higher considerations; some arrest of the breakneck speed on the highway toward the centralization of power; some real and not spurious purpose toward tariff reform; some sure separation of the politics of the country from its partnership with high finance and the high financiers; some breaking up of groups and rings, of wheels inside wheels, always involved by a change of parties, even when made only for the sake of a change. The Courier-Journal is a democrat, not a republican, and, standing by the sincerity of its record, it will support the ticket to be headed by Mr. Bryan, as actively and as earnestly as if it represented its original preference and opinion."

THREE CENT street car fares are now in vogue on all lines operating within the city of Cleveland. A Cleveland, O., dispatch says: "At the regular meeting of the city council a 'security grant' was passed under suspension of the rules to the Cleveland Railway company, a new corporation which took over the consolidated properties of the old companies. At the end of the council meeting that body, as a committee of the whole, met the officials of the Cleveland Railway company, the Cleveland Electric Railway company, the Forest City Railway company, and the Low Fare Railway company in the chamber of Commerce hall, where the final papers were signed and passed, leaving the property of the Cleveland Railway company to the Municipal Traction company, the holding, or operating, company, for fifty years. Thus ended the seven years' contest

which has been waged here for low street car fare and public control of urban transportation, marked by much bitterness throughout and noted for the many appeals made to the courts. Various predictions are made as to the time when it shall be possible to begin the proposed three cent fare, ten days being the lowest time spoken of. To bring about the settlement today, according to previous agreement, the Forest City Railway company, at a meeting of its directors, absorbed the Low Fare Railway company. The two companies, therefore, merged with the Cleveland Electric Railway company, upon action of its directors, also earlier today. The property taken over by the Cleveland Railway company, and which will be operated by the holding company, has a total valuation of \$23,690,000. To be added to this valuation eventually will be \$11,300,000 for future extensions and improvements. The holding company will have to pay a dividend of six per cent annually on the stock. All existing franchises were abandoned by the old companies. The new franchise will protect both the interests of the public and the property of the Cleveland Railway company. The grant may be renewed every ten years, but is non-revocable during any twenty-five year period. In the event the holding company fails in its purpose, the property shall revert immediately to the benefit of the Cleveland Railway company. The rate of fare shall at no time or under any circumstances be more than five cents cash fare, or six tickets for twenty-five cents. It can be made as low as good service will permit."

A CLEVELAND, O., dispatch following the passage of the street car ordinance tells of the celebration of Mayor Tom Johnson's victory in this way: "For the first time in the history of this city street car service was absolutely free today, not a fare being rung up on any car within the city limits. This action was decided upon late last night after the papers had been finally signed, ending the long street car war, in order that the occasion might be duly commemorated. It is proposed to celebrate the same date each year with free street car service. The entire street railway system of the city was today operated by the Municipal Traction company, the new holding company. It was announced this afternoon that the three-cent rate of fare will go into effect tomorrow instead of at the expiration of ten days, as had been previously planned. It was also announced today that all the conductors and motormen employed on the old Cleveland Electric railway lines will receive an increase of one cent an hour in order to put them on the same wage basis as the men employed on the other lines taken over by the holding company. About three thousand men will be affected by the increase."

THE RALEIGH (N. C.) News and Observer says: "Mr. Bryan has been greatly blessed by his enemies. They have criticised him so often upon false reports that later, when people would find out that the whole thing was based on a falsehood, they have learned to wait for the facts before accepting the criticisms of enemies. The latest criticism is that Mr. Bryan said last week that Governor Johnson's entering the contest for the presidency was an 'impertinence.' Of course Mr. Bryan never thought or said anything of the kind, but the critics went along severely abusing Mr. Bryan for an assertion that his friends knew he never could have made. After delivering themselves of the stereotyped 'rebuked' the truth came out and everybody was forced to accept the statement that there wasn't a word of truth in the publication. Did the critics apologize for the unjust comments based upon an unjust statement? No, they discovered that a newspaper correspondent in Washington who had long been an admirer of Bryan and a friend of the Nebraskan, had made the blunder of using that term about the governor of Minnesota. Mr. Bryan had never heard of the statement attributed to him until he heard the criticisms."