

# CURRENT TOPICS

A CONTROVERSY is on between Chicago's superintendent of schools and certain teachers. Margaret Haley of the Teacher's Federation, has published this list of questions, for which, she said, teachers receive as many credits as for real scholarly tests in the normal school extension course: "How does a cat drink milk?" "What are the principal parts of a hen's egg?" "How does a cat catch a mouse?" "Why do men keep cows?" "Watch a horse standing in the summer time. How does he use his tail?" "What part of an animal is that which we call meat?" "Compare your teeth with those of a cat." "In what ways do cats prove a nuisance?" "What proportion of his corn crop does a farmer feed to his cattle?" "What peculiar habit has the cow that is connected with eating?" "How does a cow bend its hind legs when it lies down? How does it get up?"

THE ST. LOUIS Mirror (rep.) makes more or less interesting remarks in this fashion: "If Mr. William Jennings Bryan wants to know one reason for the overwhelming character of his defeat last November, I can tell him that it was the great slump of Catholic democratic votes to Taft, because of that gentleman's fair treatment of the church in the Philippines. Even the simply and kindly nuns were working for Taft, in their convents. And let me say here, that this same Catholic church is going to play a bigger part in the American politics of the immediate future, for the one reason that it is the one influence, the one organization to which property can turn with hope of help against the rising revolution for a better distribution of the fruits of labor applied to the earth. The Catholic church is dead set against socialism. It has what Protestantism lacks—authority. It can enforce its authority. It is the salvation of wealth. Protestantism is fissiparous and powerless. Catholicism in the United States is the pre-destined ally of the vested interests."

THE UNITED STATES supreme court has affirmed the decree of the state courts of Texas imposing a fine of \$1,623,900 on the Waters-Pierce Oil company of St. Louis and ousting it from the state on the charge of violating the Texas anti-trust law. The court also sustained the action of the Texas state courts in the appointment of Robert J. Eckhart as receiver, and thus again decided against the company, which sought to have sustained the action of the federal court in appointing C. B. Dorchester at the instance of the company. The decision in each case was unanimous. The action was begun in the Texas courts under the state anti-trust laws and resulted in a verdict directing the cancellation of the company's permit to do business in the state and fixing a penalty of \$1,623,900 for the violation of the laws from the time that the permit was issued, on May 31, 1900, till April 24, 1907, when the action was begun.

THE BILL filed in Texas against the Standard Oil company charged that the company had violated the state laws every day since it had entered the state, through a conspiracy with the Standard Oil company of New Jersey, to control the oil business in Texas, but the company denied the charge and in addition contended that even if it had violated the law it was not amenable, because the business transacted was of an interstate character, and therefore subject only to control by the United States authorities. The penalty was at the rate of \$1,500 per day from May 31, 1900, to April 1, 1903, and at the rate of \$50 per day from that time on.

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says: "The case turned upon the point as to whether the proceedings of the state against the company had been in accordance with the constitutional requirement for due process of law, and the court held that such was the case. While regarding the fine as very large, Justice Day, who announced the decision, held that it was compe-

tent to impose it. Dealing with the contention, that the alleged conspiracy between the Waters-Pierce company and the Standard company to control the price of oil in Texas was outside the state of Texas and therefore not within the jurisdiction of the Texas courts, Justice Day said that the agreement had been executed within the state. This circumstance, he said, was conclusive with the court that the conviction was had for acts inside the state's borders. On the point that the proceedings of the state against the company had not been a due process of law, the court held: "That state legislatures have the right to deal with the subject matter and to prevent unlawful combinations to prevent competition and restraint of trade and to prohibit and punish monopolies is not open to question. Having the power to pass laws of this character, of course the state may provide for proceedings to enforce the same. The state, keeping within constitutional limitations, may provide its own method of procedure and determine the methods and means by which such laws may be made effectual. We are not prepared to say that there was a deprivation of due process of law because the statute permitted and the court charged that there might be a conviction not only for acts which accomplished the prohibited result, but also for those which tend or are reasonably calculated to bring about the things forbidden." Justice Day also discussed the contention that the fines imposed were excessive, saying that the business done in Texas by the company was very extensive and highly profitable, the property amounting to more than \$40,000,000 and its dividends being as high as 700 per cent per annum. "Assuming," he said, "that the defendant was guilty of a violation of laws over a period of years and in transacting business upon so large a scale we are not prepared to say that there was want of due process of law in the penalties imposed."

THE FIRST official act of Will M. Maupin, Nebraska's labor commissioner, was a formal and eloquent tribute to the hen. Commissioner Maupin said: "Thought I knew something about the great Nebraska hen, but since I have occupied this desk I've been filling up on information. The hen has not had the proper recognition. We've talked about the steer and the dairy cow and the hog until we have fallen into the habit of thinking that the hen is a side issue, so to speak. Why, she brought \$18,000,000 worth of eggs to market in Nebraska last year, to say nothing of the value of her offspring in the way of fried chicken. She laid 1,200,000,000 eggs in 1908. Placed end to end these eggs would reach around the earth and then overlap 12,000 miles. They would make an egg walk three feet wide reaching from Omaha to Ogden. They would furnish the 'and' part of a 'ham and' breakfast for 600,000,000 people, and make an omelette containing 625,000 cubic feet. If the Nebraska hen laid \$18,000,000 worth of eggs in 1908, and her offspring was worth one-half as much more in the shape of fried chicken and chicken pie, the hen was worth more to Nebraska than our boasted wheat crop of \$26,000,000; almost twice as much as our oat crop of \$16,000,000; twenty times as much as our barley crop; twenty-times as much as our rye crop, and one-third as much as our corn crop—and we have talked about our corn crop until all the world knows Nebraska beats them all. Now why shouldn't we begin giving the grand old Nebraska hen her just due? Really we ought to have a new seal for this great state, and when it is designed we ought to insist that the Nebraska hen receive proper recognition thereon."

IN THE San Francisco legislature a number of bills have been introduced seeking to bar from the state Japanese. President Roosevelt wired Governor Gillett asking that all efforts at anti-Japanese legislation be postponed, adding that a letter follows. A Washington dispatch carried by the Associated Press and referring to this letter says: "It was impossible for the president in his letter to Governor Gillett to tell all of the reasons that influenced him in making the unprecedented protest he did

against such action by the California legislature. He did develop the fact that under the agreement reached two years ago between America and Japan not only had Japanese immigration into America decreased, but also that there had been an actual reduction in the number of Japanese residents in this country. He could not say that the California anti-Japanese legislation would undoubtedly cause the Japanese government to relax the efforts which it now is honestly making to restrict coolie immigration to America, yet that thought was in the mind of the administration. There are other factors, which for diplomatic reasons, could not be mentioned in a letter which was sure to be published, but which are well known to the members of the senate and house committees on foreign affairs, and which doubtless influenced the conservative Pacific coast men in congress to whom they were made known in deprecating such action as was proposed."

SOME OF the members of the legislature resent the president's efforts. A Sacramento dispatch carried by the Associated Press says: "Grove L. Johnson, who has introduced the measure preventing aliens from acting as directors of corporations, is openly defiant and asserts that he will do all he can to push the anti-Japanese measures. Senator Sanford, the leader of the democratic caucus, resents the interference of the president, calling it impudent. He asserts that California is quite capable of taking care of its own affairs and will not submit to dictation. He also declared that the federal government had not kept the promises it made two years ago when the legislature consented to drop the anti-Japanese legislation then before it."

GOVERNOR GILLETT, however, seems to be in sympathy with the president. In a newspaper interview the governor says: "After conferring with the leading members of both branches of the legislature tonight, I am convinced that no legislation directed against the Japanese will be enacted. I am satisfied that the people of California and particularly the members of our legislature appreciate the efforts being made by the federal government and the representatives of Japan to stop immigration to this country of Japanese laborers, skilled and unskilled. There can be no doubt that the Japanese government is acting absolutely in good faith in its endeavor to prevent its people emigrating to our country, and in my judgment it would be a serious mistake while they are so doing to enact any laws directed against the Japanese people. This question is one in which the federal government is particularly interested, and its wishes should be carefully considered and will be, I am sure, by the people of this state."

TWO MEN fell from the fifteenth floor of a Kansas City building. They were L. E. Trout and Charles Pepperdine. Trout who was not seriously injured tells this dramatic story of his experiences: "When the scaffold broke in the middle I realized I was too far from the ropes which descended at either end to seize one. I resigned myself to fate. It took about two and one-half seconds to descend eighty-four feet, or half way down. In those two seconds I thought of enough things to make a volume. My first thought was this: 'Will my wife forgive me for working in a dangerous place and telling her I was working inside?' I wondered if the news of my death would kill my wife. Then I wondered why I did not strike the bottom. It seemed that I had been in the air an hour, and I longed to reach the bottom to end my suspense. I knew that my companion was ahead of me in the descent through space, and I wondered what luck he was having. Every unkind word I had ever uttered to my wife in little quarrels stood before me as if painted in flaring lines on a billboard. They cut me to the quick and I thought how differently I should have acted if I had known what a terrible death and abrupt parting was coming. I wished that instead of an instantaneous death I might have