

CURRENT TOPICS

THE NEW primary law of California will be tested for the first time next August. A writer in the Nashville Tennessee Banner, says: "This law provides that all candidates for municipal, county and state offices shall be nominated by primary votes, and that a primary advisory vote may be taken for United States senator. One feature of the law is the requirement that nominations of candidates before the primary shall be made by petition, and that the signers of petitions shall represent different parts of the election district. For instance, before a man may become a candidate in the primary for a nomination for a state office the petition in his behalf must be signed by at least one per cent of the voters of his party in each of at least ten counties in the state and in the aggregate by at least one per cent of the total number of party voters in the state. Similar provisions apply to the smaller election districts."

THE GOEBEL murder case is now only a part of history. An Associated Press dispatch under date of Frankfort, Ky., April 23, says: "Governor Wilson at 6 o'clock this evening cleared the Kentucky court records of all charges growing out of the murder in January, 1900, of Senator William Goebel, who was declared to have been elected governor, except those hanging over state's evidence witnesses in the alleged conspiracy, by granting pardons before trial to former Governor W. S. Taylor and former Secretary of State Charley Finley, who have been fugitives in the state of Indiana for nine years; to John Powers, brother of Caleb Powers, who is believed to be in Honduras; to Holland Whitaker of Butler county, John Davis of Louisville, and Zeach Steele of Bell county, under indictment, and who did not flee from the state. Those over whom indictments are left hanging are Wharton Golden of Knox county, now in Colorado; Frank Cecil of Bell county, now a railroad detective in St. Louis, and William H. Coulton of Owsley county, said to have died in the west a few months ago. These cases, with the possible exception of Cecil, will be dismissed, leaving Henry E. Youtsey, now serving a life sentence in the state penitentiary, the only person to suffer for the taking off of Goebel. The petition asking for the pardon of Taylor and Finley was presented to Governor Wilson recently by Caleb Powers, who himself had only recently been pardoned by the governor upon indictment and after four trials for alleged connection with the same crime. The petition was largely signed in Kentucky and other states. Reiterating the belief he expressed some months ago, when he granted pardons to Caleb Powers and James P. Howard that no one but Youtsey had part in the murder, and that it was not a conspiracy, Governor Willson says that he believes it a 'sacred duty, which I must no longer delay, to carry this belief into effect.'"

SENATOR STONE, of Missouri, addressed the senate advocating his plans for Philippine independence within fifteen years or some similar period to be determined upon and free trade with the Philippine Islands in the meantime. In the form of an amendment Mr. Stone proposed to strike out section 5 of the Aldrich-Payne tariff bill and to substitute a provision declaring it to be the policy of the United States to grant independence to the islands whenever they have "organized a stable government capable of maintaining public order;" to negotiate agreements with other powers to insure the islands' independence by neutralizing them; to admit free of duty into the United States until this policy has been fulfilled "all articles wholly the growth and product of the islands," in consideration of which agricultural implements and machinery, cotton and cotton manufactures, books and publications and machinery for use in manufactures of all kinds, "wholly the growth and product of the United States," should be admitted free into the islands. While not opposing the section in question on protection grounds, Mr. Stone admitted that he had been much impressed by the contention that the free importation of sugar and tobacco from the Philippines would be disastrous to the grow-

ers of tobacco and sugar beets and cane in this country without a corresponding benefit to the consumer. He admitted that free trade might so alarm those interested in the development of the growing beet sugar industry in this country as to check its expansion. Furthermore, he questioned the wisdom of encouraging the investment of American capital to build up industries of a foreign country to the detriment of our own. Summarizing his reason for not supporting the section of the bill as it stands, Mr. Stone said he could not do so because—"First, If the islands are to be regarded as an American territory, then they are within the union, and their products should have free access to all our ports without restriction or limitation. Second, If our occupation of the islands is intended to be only temporary, and if it be our policy to surrender them to their own people, then we should pass no law which would tend to create such commercial or political conditions between the islands and this country as might delay or embarrass the final completion of our purpose; and, third, We are under no such obligations to the Philippine people as to make it our duty to support their government or to build up their industries at the expense of our own. I prefer to stand squarely upon the democratic platform, and do for the Filipinos what we have already done for the Cubans—set them upon their feet and let them work out their own destiny."

THOSE ROOSEVELT republicans who believed that Mr. Taft could be depended upon to support real tariff revision will be interested in the following Washington dispatch to the St. Louis Republic: "All hope of a revision downward disappeared and the chance of the enactment of an income tax was materially lessened when President Taft's indorsement of the Aldrich bill minus an income tax became known today. The immediate result was the display of absolute confidence by Senator Aldrich, who, after Senator Cummins introduced his income tax amendment and delivered his speech defending it, started his tariff bill upon greased ways and down towards its final passage. The formal reading of the bill paragraph by paragraph was begun. Those persons who hitherto have doubted are now convinced that President Taft has lined with the 'reactionary' forces in the senate and against the western element, known as the 'progressives.' Until now other developments have indicated that such is the position chosen by the new president. He stood with Speaker Cannon and assisted him in passing the 'gag' rule whereby the Payne bill, somewhat mutilated, but still a measure carrying higher average duties than the Dingley law, was put through the house. He permitted Attorney General Wickersham to whitewash the threatened new prosecution of the beef trust for rebating. Appointments have been made under the machine system which obeys the wishes of the politicians working through the senators. In these and other minor ways those of the 'Roosevelt policies' in line with western radical sentiment have been obviously tossed into the discard."

THE OLD question "who wrote the Junius letters" is being revived. Charles R. Brock writes to the Denver News this note: "Apropos the recent and interesting article in the News on the identity of 'Junius,' copy of a clipping from the Cornhill Magazine is herewith submitted. This clipping I found in an edition of Junius, presented to me nineteen years ago by the late Colonel John O. Hodges of Lexington, Ky." The clipping from the Cornhill Magazine follows: "It seems strange that a love letter should supply another link in fixing the authorship of the most scathing invective and the bitterest sarcasm in the language. But there is published at the end of Mr. Chabot's book, as the work of another well known expert, Mr. Netherclift, the fac-simile of an epistle to a lady, in a disguised upright hand of Sir Philip Francis that is identical with the disguised upright hand of Junius. It was written at Bath in the winter of 1770 to a Miss Giles, daughter of one of the officials of the Bank of England, afterward gov-

ernor when in the time of Mr. Pitt the Bank of England stopped payment. In those days it was customary at the assembly rooms for a lady to retain her partner during the whole of the evening and for several evenings Mr. Francis and Miss Giles danced together. The result of it was a very tolerable copy of verses, delivered to Miss Giles with an anonymous letter, wherein the writer declared that, having found the verses, which were unaddressed, he could not conceive for whom they were meant, unless for her. At the time the young lady suspected the author, but said nothing, and it was not till years afterward, when, through the wife of Mr. King, of Taplow, she still kept the papers, that a scrap of Junius' writing was being handed round the company in which she happened to be. 'Why,' exclaimed Mrs. King, when the paper came to her, 'I know that writing. The person who wrote that wrote me some verses and a letter.' And on comparison, though the verses were plainly by another hand, the letter was as plainly in the hand of Junius. The verses, Sir Philip's composition, were afterward proved to have been dictated to his friend, Tilghman, who spent the winter of 1770 with him at Bath, in one of whose letters from America part of a verse is jokingly quoted, in proof of Francis' capacity for poetry of the highest order."

IN AN EDITORIAL entitled "Mr. Bryan Should be Heard From," the New York Tribune says: "It will be remembered that shortly after the election Mr. Bryan, with a fine minatory air, called upon Tammany to explain why it had done no better for the national democratic candidate. He reminded the public that four years before it had also made a signal failure, although that year 'it was understood that both the ticket and the platform suited Tammany.' And he asked the very pointed question: 'Is the national party to have Tammany used as an argument against it, and when Tammany is powerless to help the national party, even when it does its best?' In other words, must the democracy continue to suffer from the discredit of harboring the Tammany organization without any compensating benefit? This we have always thought was one of the most promising lines of inquiry ever opened by the democracy's moral leader. Nothing is more likely to stir the democratic conscience than the thought of a dishonorable connection, with 'nothing in it' for the party. We have been waiting eagerly for Mr. Bryan to proceed along this line. If he has been pausing only until further occasion should provoke him, he has his occasion now. One of his issues in the last election was reform in the house rules and improvement in the conditions of legislation in congress. Yet when the democratic party had it in its power, with the aid of the republican 'insurgents' in the house of representatives, to reform the house rules, Tammany, with its ally, McCarrren, deserted, preventing the democracy from putting a substantial achievement to its credit and leaving its representation in the house demoralized. Mr. Bryan has thus a new count against Tammany. Not only is the connection discreditable to the democracy at election times, but it is disadvantageous at all other seasons. Tammany is not only a disgraceful but a treacherous ally. Let Mr. Bryan give this practical situation a moral turn and rouse the conscience of his party, for if he does nothing after what has just happened in Washington his party's conscience will surely go stale."

WILLIAM MARION REEDY, editor of the St. Louis Mirror, knows something about the kind of prosperity which the republican party is giving the American people. In an editorial printed in the Mirror, Mr. Reedy says: "O, yes; prosperity is here. Men are selling themselves on the block in Brooklyn, to the highest bidder. A man in Baltimore offers himself for sale in a 'want ad' in one of the papers. What a ghastly, damnable fraud the papers foster with their editorial proclamation of returned good times and revived business. There may be 'white lies.' This prosperity lie is not one of them. It is the blackest sort of lie, for it nurses