

CURRENT TOPICS

ORMSBY McHARG, assistant secretary of the department of commerce and labor, has resigned and his resignation will be accepted. Mr. McHarg is a native of South Dakota and about three years ago became an assistant attorney in the department of justice. He was one of the original Taft men and has always been regarded as being particularly strong with the president. In a newspaper interview Mr. McHarg declared "the talk about a water power monopoly is absurd," and he assailed the Roosevelt policy of conservation of natural resources, poking considerable fun at the former president's utterances on the subject. Washington dispatches say that McHarg intended to resign before he gave this interview and that his resignation was not due to his attack upon the Roosevelt administration.

IN HIS INTERVIEW Mr. McHarg says: "The reclamation service during the latter part of President Roosevelt's administration carried on a purely 'dog-in-the-manger' policy, that has done much to hold back various sections of the west. It couldn't carry out the projects economically for which congress had made appropriations, yet it would not allow private enterprises to step in and build any irrigation system, where its fruits could have been immediate. No, the dreamers had the reins, and they were scheming in various ways for the welfare and uplift of the woolly westerner. They were going to build a vast watered empire in the desert in their own visionary way."

REFERRING TO the McHarg resignation the Washington correspondent for the Philadelphia North American says: "There was no excuse for McHarg's outburst. He violated all the recognized official courtesy by injecting himself into the controversy between Secretary Ballinger and Chief Forester Pinchot. There was nothing involved in the question at issue that would have come before Mr. McHarg as assistant secretary of commerce and labor for official action. In the department of commerce and labor Mr. McHarg would not have any more to do with the conservation policy of the government than one of the bureau chiefs of the navy department. Evidently he coolly planned an insult to former President Roosevelt and one of his chief advisers, Mr. Pinchot. Mr. McHarg had never been disposed to talk for publication. Up to this time he had refrained from discussing matters which came under his jurisdiction. During the time when he was connected with the Taft pre-convention organization he was a man of silence. Even Postmaster General Hitchcock, as manager of the Taft forces, talked more than his lieutenant, Mr. McHarg. As he was co-operating with President Roosevelt in bringing about the nomination of Taft, it was assumed that he was progressive. There is no doubt that the President was astonished when he read the bitter attack which the assistant secretary of commerce and labor made upon the Roosevelt reforms."

CONCERNING the McHarg interview and resignation the New York World says: "In his desire to discredit the policy of conservation of natural resources, Ormsby McHarg, the assistant secretary of commerce and labor, overplayed his hand. His attack on the forestry service in particular showed more prejudice than common sense. The prompt acceptance of his resignation by Mr. Taft should be a hint to loose-tongued officials to avoid extravagance of statement and pay more heed to team-work in the public service. No expert knowledge is needed to demonstrate the danger of exhausting our lumber supply. Over immense areas of the old lumbering sections of states like Michigan and Wisconsin only stumps remain. The capital invested in Michigan in the manufacture of lumber showed a decline of \$60,000,000 in the decade from 1890 to 1900. At present the south is intent upon stripping itself bare of its pine forests. On the Pacific coast only the prodigality of nature retards the day of utter devastation. Even if it were true, as Mr. McHarg

rashly asserted, that 'there is enough timber standing in the state of Washington alone to supply this country for fifty years,' is that a reason for abandoning all precautions against a policy of unrestrained wastefulness? With the disappearance of the pine forests the price of building material in recent years has risen rapidly. White pine, one of the most serviceable of woods, within a single generation has quintupled in value, and is not easy to get at that. The hard woods used in furniture-making and interior finishing are becoming scarce. Associate Forester Price points out the real source of danger when he says: 'We take from our forests each year, not counting the loss by fire, three and a half times their growth. We take forty cubic feet per acre for every twelve cubic feet grown; we take 260 cubic feet per capita, while Germany uses thirty-seven cubic feet and France twenty-five cubic feet.' Because as a people we have so far had enough timber we have not yet taken to heart the lesson of older countries and learned not only to protect our resources but to practice systematic reforestation."

A STORY OF heroism is told in an Associated Press dispatch under date of Seattle, August 27, as follows: "One man, a wireless operator, gave his life that more than 200 might be saved today when George E. Eccles of Seattle went down with the Alaska Steamship company's steamer Ohio, while sounding 'C. Q. D.' His calls for help as his vessel was sinking brought the steamers Kingfisher, Humboldt and Rupert City to the rock of Steep Point in Hishkish narrows, British Columbia, and all but himself and four others were saved. Only one passenger lost his life. The Ohio went down thirteen minutes after it struck. The drowned: Purser Frederick J. Stephen, Seattle; Wireless Operator George Eccles, Seattle; the Quartermaster; a soldier, name unknown; a steerage passenger, name unknown. Pilot Snow was on the bridge when the ship struck. The boats were lowered at once and women and children taken off first. The soldier and the steerage passenger were killed by the upsetting of a boat during the rescue of the passengers. The Humboldt took twenty survivors to Ketchikan, Alaska. The others will arrive at Vancouver tomorrow on the Rupert City. Operator Eccles assisted valiantly in rescue work and is reported to have been drowned while so engaged. Purser Stephen is also said to have given his life that the passengers and other members of the crew might be saved. The Ohio left Seattle August 21 for Fort Graham and Valdez, Alaska, and including crew and passengers had 210 persons on board. A wireless dispatch says the Ohio sank in three minutes. This probably means that she was on the reef a considerable time and that the passengers were all off before the ship slid into deep water, which she did so speedily as to carry down five of the crew. Some of the passengers were taken ashore in life boats and picked up by the fishing boat Kingfisher and taken to Swanson Bay. Others were taken on the Humboldt and Rupert City. The Humboldt's passengers will be landed at Ketchikan and the Rupert City is taking her passengers to Vancouver."

THE UNITED STATES Wireless company, one of whose operators, G. E. Eccles of Winnipeg, perished in the sinking of the steamship Ohio off the Alaskan coast, received an account of the disaster from Operator Booth at Ketchikan, Alaska. "About 1 a. m. I was sitting with my receivers clapped to my ears, having just finished working with Operator Eccles on board the Ohio, when I was startled by hearing him call 'C. Q. D.' 'C. Q. D.' I immediately answered and he sent the following message: 'Ohio struck a rock—steamer sinking—send aid immediately, or everybody will be lost.' The steamships Humboldt and Rupert of the McKenzie Bros. steamship company, happened to be near at the time, and they both called the Ohio, asking for her latitude. Eccles gave it immediately and the Rupert flashed back that they would change their course and stand by

the Ohio as soon as possible. In the meantime Eccles sent out another message, saying: 'Ohio sinking fast; can not hold out. Passengers being taken off in small boats. Captain and crew will stick to the last.' The Humboldt and Rupert both replied that they were headed for the Ohio and would pick the passengers up. Then came the final message from the stricken vessel. It was never finished: 'Passengers all off and adrift in small boats,' it said; 'captain and crew going off in the last boat; waiting for me now—good-bye.' I was unable to get him again," concludes Booth, "and I knew he had gone down with his ship."

A LEXINGTON, Ky., dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Kentucky has a visitor tonight who for nine years was an exile from his native state because of his alleged connection with the assassination of William Goebel. Former Governor William S. Taylor, who now lives in Indianapolis, and who was pardoned three months ago by Governor Willson of all charges against him growing out of the Goebel murder, is in Louisville tonight and probably will come here tomorrow or next day. This is Taylor's first visit to Kentucky since he fled from the state in 1899, soon after Goebel was shot. He is apparently in good health. He says he will never return to Kentucky to live, as the state has brought him too much sorrow, his wife and daughter having died of broken hearts as a result of the accusations against him. Taylor probably will visit his old home in the Whitley county mountains before returning to Indianapolis. If he does so he will be given a public reception by his former townspeople."

GLENN H. CURTISS, an American, won the Bennett trophy on the Bethany aviation field at Rheims, France. Curtiss made the fastest aerial journey of twenty kilometres (12.42 miles) ever accomplished. Referring to Curtiss' feat the Associated Press says: "His time, 15 minutes, 53.5 seconds, was only 53.5 seconds faster than that made by Bleriot over the same course. The other two pilots who represented France, Latham and Lefebvre, finished respectively in 17 minutes, 32 seconds, and 20 minutes, 47.35 seconds. Cockburn, an Englishman, ran into a haystack as he was manoeuvring for the start and did not cross the line. Several other machines which were expected to start were not ready within the time limit. The race lay between Bleriot and Curtiss, with Latham as a possible outsider. Lefebvre on previous performances apparently had no chance. Fortune favored the American. Curtiss stole a march on his rivals by getting away early. Finding conditions favorable at 10 o'clock in the morning he decided to take no chances in the fickle weather and after a trial trip in which he made the circuit of the course in 7 minutes, 55.15 seconds, lowering the world's record by nine seconds, he started immediately on his attempt to win the cup. He handled his machine, which flew along at a speed never before witnessed, in masterly style. The first round, 6.21 miles, was made in 7 minutes, 57.25 seconds, but the second round was covered in 7 minutes, 53.15 seconds, another world's record. Bleriot, the French favorite, whose machine was equipped with a four-bladed propeller, in his trial made 7:57.15 for the round. Then he substituted a two-bladed propeller but this proved slower still and the French began to doubt the ability of their champion. Bleriot replaced the original propeller. In the meantime Lefebvre in a Wright biplane flew over the court but his time was five minutes slower than that of Curtiss. The excitement grew steadily as 5 o'clock, which the public understood was the time limit for starting in this event, approached. At 5 o'clock the crowds concluded that the two French champions had defaulted but a minute later it was announced that the rule allowed a start any time before 5:30 o'clock. A few minutes later Bleriot and Latham crossed the line in quick succession. Bleriot went by the tribune at a terrific pace and finished the round in almost the identical time of Curtiss' fastest lap, covering the ten kilometres in 7:53.35, but his