

CURRENT TOPICS

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the New York Sun says: "Anti-Bryan people here were jubilant when they read in the newspapers this morning that Governor Johnson had shown himself to be an athlete at Old Point Comfort, Va. The story that he turned two double somersaults in diving from a spring board into the swimming pool at the Chamberlain hotel will help him tremendously, they say, with a people who have been trained in the last seven years to demand physical dexterity of their popular heroes. Mr. Bryan is no athlete, they say, and by no possibility could he make the kind of dive that Governor Johnson made. And if Johnson is nominated, according to their contention, he would be far better equipped to win the plaudits of the voters than any republican likely to be chosen to run against him. It is out of the question for Mr. Taft to do athletic stunts, they declare."

THE BIT OF buncombe indulged in by the republican house with respect to the campaign contribution measure is described by the Washington correspondent for the Louisville Courier-Journal in this way: "The Crumpacker bill, including the campaign publicity section, was sent to the senate privileges and election committee today within a few minutes after its formal report from the house. It will stay there during the remainder of the session, and next winter, the elections being over, there will be no agitation for the publicity feature. As for the reduction of the southern representation, there never was a possibility that it could get through the senate. The net result is a big thing for the republican party. A campaign fund can be collected just as it always has been; even the president can make denial of it without fear of dispute until after the election, and from California to Maine the campaign managers will be in possession of a barrel from the republican national committee."

COMMENTING UPON this the Courier-Journal says editorially: "The whole pretension of the republican party to favor a bill providing for campaign publicity was exposed as buncombe by the total lack of interest taken in it by the president, by the gingerly way in which the bill was handled by members of the party in the house and by the revolutionary, dangerous and impossible 'rider' attached to it by Representative Crumpacker. The bill has served as an instrument to reveal the double-dealing of the republicans as scarcely anything else has done recently. The party will now proceed to collect from the tariff-protected corporations vast sums of corruption money to be used in the impending presidential campaign. The so-called tariff-revision movement will give valuable aid to the process of extorting funds from moneyed interests. 'Give, or we'll revise the tariff against you,' ought to make many a tariff-supported trust stand and deliver, like any other victim of highwaymen. The republicans are splendidly fixed for a campaign of corruption, and, doubtless, they will mulct the corporations as mercilessly as they did during the Roosevelt campaign of 1904."

THE ALDRICH-VREELAND currency bill passed the senate at four o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, May 31, by a vote of forty-eight to twenty-two. Senator LaFollette made a gallant effort to filibuster and Senator Stone of Missouri and Senator Gore of Oklahoma undertook to support him, but the effort was in vain. Senator LaFollette, although a sick man, spoke for eighteen hours. The filibuster was defeated largely by the sharp tactics of Senator Aldrich who, according to Walter Wellman of the Chicago Record-Herald, was aided and abetted by Vice President Fairbanks. At the critical moment Senator LaFollette, who had retired for some rest, returned to his place; this was just as the clerk under instructions from the vice president had commenced to call the roll. The scene is described by Walter Wellman in this way: "At this juncture Mr. LaFollette came upon the scene. He was too late. His

face was livid with rage. His voice trembled as he rose during the roll call and asked if a parliamentary inquiry was in order. Aldrich and Foraker and Hale promptly reminded him and the presiding officer that it was not. The obliging clerk went on with the call of the names. Then, raising both his arm and his voice, the senator from Wisconsin in a manner dramatic enough to do full justice to the traditions of his family, sang out, drowning the tones of the clerk and the confusion and bustle in the chamber, packed from floor to roof with an excited multitude: 'Mr. President!' No response save the voice of the clerk. 'Mr. President!' Again no other reply than the call of the names of a few more senators. 'Mr. President!' thundered the little man from Wisconsin, 'I rise to a question of order.' This time the clerk stopped and the presiding officer turned his head toward the speaker. 'I wish to make a parliamentary inquiry.' 'The senator from Wisconsin is out of order.' 'And from that decision of the chair I appeal,' said LaFollette. 'And I move to lay that motion on the table,' from Mr. Foraker. In a few minutes the machine had rolled on another stage of its victorious way, and for a brief season the leader of the great filibustering expedition subsided. But not for long. He tried to secure the recognition of the chair for asking if he changed his vote from nay to yea, he could then move to reconsider. The chair declined to enlighten him, and the republicans cried for the regular order. Nevertheless Mr. LaFollette changed his vote, and at the conclusion of the roll call tried to get recognition to move a reconsideration. Mr. Aldrich addressed the chair at the same moment, whereupon Mr. LaFollette in passionate tones declared that he was entitled to recognition because he had been standing at his place, while the senator from Rhode Island was not at his place, as required by the rules. This was manifestly true, as Mr. Aldrich was at the moment standing in the center aisle far away from his seat. Notwithstanding this the vice president recognized Mr. Aldrich. As the senator from Wisconsin took his seat the galleries broke into long and continuous applause for the gallant effort which he had made. The senate refused to reconsider the vote, and one of the most desperate blockades ever seen in the senate chamber came to an end."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT promptly signed the currency bill. All of the affirmative votes were cast by republicans, but Senators Borah, Brown, Bourne and Heyburn, republicans, voted with the democrats against the bill. The vice president announced the appointment of Senators Aldrich, Allison, Burrows, Hale, Knox, Daniel, Teller, Money and Bailey as members of the currency commission authorized by act of congress. The speaker appointed members of the commission on behalf of the house as follows: Messrs. Vreeland of New York, Overstreet of Indiana, Burton of Ohio, Weeks of Massachusetts, Bonyng of Colorado, Smith of California, republicans; Padgett of Tennessee, Burgess of Texas and Pujo of Louisiana, democrats. Congress adjourned at 11:50 o'clock Saturday night.

THE FOLLOWING is from the New York Evening Post: "Bryan has received three-quarters of all the votes cast in Alabama, will undoubtedly get an instructed delegation from that state, and will continue his triumphant march throughout the entire south. Looked at in any way, this is an extraordinary political phenomenon. For there is no mistaking the fact that the leading southern senators and representatives are either lukewarm or hostile toward Bryan. So are the most influential southern newspapers. Expressions of dislike for him personally, distrust of his policies, and despair of success under his leadership, could be quoted by the column from those who are supposed to mold public opinion in the south. Yet Mr. Bryan has gone behind the official leaders and guides of his party, and shown that he commands a majority of the democratic voters. And he has done this in other states, north and

west, as well as in Alabama and the south. It is a remarkable demonstration of political strength. Whether we like it or not, we are bound to recognize it. Even if we distrust the man, we must admit that he has a wonderful hold upon the mass of his party. As it was said of the popularity of Dickens that it was a part of the total fact which critics had to explain, so the most convinced opponent of Bryan can not deny his political strength, or escape the necessity of studying the secret of it."

A DISPATCH to the St. Louis Republic under date of Fayetteville, N. C., May 22, says: "Solicitor N. A. Sinclair returned last night from Savannah, Ga., where he attended the funeral of his aunt, Mrs. Mary McNeill. On the train with Sinclair was Secretary Taft and three attendants, two white men and a negro. The secretary and his party boarded the train at Charleston, S. C., having returned from a trip to Panama, and being then on their way to Washington. The secretary ordered four covers laid on his table for dinner. On account of the considerable bulk of the secretary, it was found necessary to extend the table, which usually accommodated four people, in order that the party might find seats about it. As the big man and his three companions appeared in the dining car and were preparing to take their seats, the conductor of the train appeared and quietly informed Mr. Taft that in South Carolina, where the 'Jim Crow' laws are stringent, colored people are required to wait until all the whites on the train have completed their meal before they are allowed to eat. The negro companion of the secretary was forced to retire, in spite of the protests of Mr. Taft. This is considered to be a rather high bid on the part of the secretary for the southern negro vote. The incident is being considerably discussed among the southern people."

WRITING TO the Chicago Record-Herald from Washington, Walter Wellman says: "Republican discontent with the winter's work and anxiety as to the outcome of next fall's presidential and congressional elections are the dominant notes of the closing days of this session. It would not be accurate to say that the republican leaders are in a panic. They are not. But from President Roosevelt down they are discontented; they blame one another for the collapse of party leadership and failure to carry out a program that will satisfy the country, and they are fearful that Bryan may beat Taft in November. President Roosevelt places the responsibility upon the leaders in congress who were trying to 'get even' with him, and the leaders on the hill place the blame on the shoulders of the president for what they call his ill-advised effort not only to dictate legislation but to name his own successor."

REPUBLICAN LEADERS certainly take a gloomy view of the situation. In the same dispatch Mr. Wellman says: "Not for many years have the republicans finished a session of congress upon the eve of the national conventions and the presidential campaign in as bad humor as they are at this moment. No one appears to be content. Everyone appears to be fearful of what is to happen in November. It is the almost universal belief here that Taft and Bryan are to be the rival candidates, and it is a curious fact that, whereas a few weeks ago very few democrats felt any hope of Bryan's election and very few republicans would admit the possibility of defeat of their ticket, now most democrats are hopeful, while some are confident and a great majority of the republicans are pessimistic. A few republicans go farther and confess their belief that Bryan is going to win. One man, prominent in republican councils and a powerful speaker on the stump in every campaign, admitted to me his belief that Taft would be beaten at the polls. Of course this is only one man's opinion and does not count for much, but some of the reasons which he gave for his pessimism were interesting, to say the least. 'The party in power