

CURRENT TOPICS

AFTER THREE weeks of consideration the Payne tariff bill passed the house of representatives by a vote of 217 to 161. The Associated Press report says: "One republican, Austin of Tennessee, voted against the measure and four democrats, all from Louisiana—Broussard, Estopinal, Pujo and Wickliffe—voted for it. An attempt by Champ Clark, the minority leader, to recommit the bill with instructions signally failed. The day was filled with excitement from the moment the session began at noon until the minute of adjournment. The members were keyed up to the highest pitch, and a practically full membership remained on duty throughout. The final vote demonstrated the capacity of the republican organization to get together. The situation with respect to lumber was greatly relieved to the republican leaders when it became manifest that the advocates of the proposition placing it on the free list were in the minority. Because of that fact, Mr. Fitzgerald of New York charged that a midnight deal had been made last night whereby free lumber was to be voted down and the rates on barley and barley malt increased, and this notwithstanding the denials of Messrs. Mann of Illinois, and Cushman of Washington, who offered the barley amendments. The general public was greatly interested in the proceedings and the galleries were packed. Both the diplomatic and executive reservations likewise were fully occupied, Mrs. Taft being among those present. When the bill actually was passed the republicans cheered lustily, some dancing up and down the aisles and patting their fellow members on the back."

TO PASS the Payne bill did not require the time consumed in passing its predecessor, the Dingley bill. The Associated Press report says: "While more consideration in point of time has been given by the house to the Payne bill, it was passed in fewer days than the Dingley bill was acted upon after being reported to the house. The Payne bill was introduced on March 17, reported to the house by the ways and means committee on the following day and was under general debate for sixteen days. On Monday of the present week the rules committee reported a special order which closed the general discussion and provided for the consideration of the bill under the five-minute rule. Chairman Payne handled the bill on the floor and divided the time in such a way that only paragraphs affected by committee amendments and the amendments permitted by the special rule had been considered when the time to vote on the measure was reached. The Dingley bill was under consideration in the house for two days longer than the Payne bill, but the house was not in session as long each day as during the consideration of the latter measure. All during the general debate on the Payne bill the house sat for ten and one-half hours each day, thus establishing a record for that body. Mr. Olmstead of Pennsylvania presided as chairman of the committee of the whole house on the state of the union throughout the twenty days that were given to the bill."

CONCERNING THE changes in the bill as it came from the committee the Associated Press says: "One of the principal changes affected in the Payne bill since its introduction was the placing of petroleum on the free list. This involved a more seriously contested fight than any of the other amendments. Speaker Cannon during the debate to reduce the duty, took the floor in defense of the higher rate of duty. Although an amendment to place oil on the free list was lost yesterday, a similar amendment offered by Chairman Payne today was carried. Among the other important amendments that have been made since the bill came from committee were those striking out the provision for a duty on tea and the countervailing duty proviso on coffee. The elimination of the maximum duty of 20 per cent on coffee, contained in the maximum section of the bill was also significant. To the free list were added evergreen seedlings, clover and nut oil, which is used in making varnish. The patent law provision, intended to retaliate for the new British patent law, was stricken out on account of an interna-

tional convention. The so-called 'joker' in the cotton cloth schedule, which it was claimed would increase the duty of the Dingley bill several hundred per cent, was corrected, the proviso for the method of counting threads in the cloth being made the same as in the present law. The section restricting the contents of packages of tobacco was amended to conform with the present law in order that union labels may not be excluded from such packages. The drawback section was added to so it would not be taken advantage of for the purpose of speculating in grain, and the Philippine free trade provision was amended so that rice will not be admitted free from the islands. The countervailing clause on lumber was stricken out, but a strong effort to place lumber on the free list did not succeed. The duties on barley, barley malt, charcoal, iron, pineapples in crates, saccharine, medicated cotton and cotton collars and cuffs, as originally in the bill, were increased. To retaliate against Turkey, which country prohibits the importation of American filler tobacco, a proviso was included in the tobacco schedule increasing the duty on filler tobacco from any country which prohibits the importation of the American tobacco. The internal revenue law was also amended so that raisers of tobacco will not have to pay a manufacturers' license in order to dispense of their leaf tobacco. There were several technical changes in the steel schedule, principally downward, and lace curtain and netting machines were included in the proviso, which permits the entry free of duty of lace machinery prior to May 1, 1910. Hides, hosiery and gloves were left as reported by the committee, hides remaining free and an increased duty being presented for gloves and stockings."

AN ASSOCIATED Press dispatch under date of Washington, April 9, says: "It was advertised in a local paper Thursday that there had been found in the collection plate of the Roscoe Methodist Episcopal church near here, after the services last Sunday night, a \$10,000 bill and the church officers think the donor made a mistake. The yearly collections of the church do not average much more than that amount, and the officials in the advertisement say they will return the money to the owner if he wants it back and can prove he inadvertently dropped it into the plate."

NEBRASKA WILL have no state-wide primary this year. Under a law enacted at the recent session of the legislature political parties are not permitted to nominate candidates for judges, regents of the state university or school officials. All such candidates must go upon the ballot by petition and without party designation. This year Nebraska will choose judges of the supreme court and regents of the state university and, therefore, a primary election will be unnecessary. Each party will hold a convention July 27, which convention will select the state committee. Each county will be entitled to at least one delegate in this convention and the state committee will apportion the number of additional delegates to which each county is entitled in accordance with the vote cast at the presidential election.

IN GIVING his approval of the daylight saloon bill Governor Shallenberger of Nebraska made the following statement: "Senate File No. 283 is a regulatory amendment to the present Slocumb law, which has stood for twenty-five years upon our statute books as an example of reasonable liquor legislation for the state. The Slocumb law was passed at a time when public opinion was excited upon the liquor question much as at present, and because of the fact that it was a decided step in advance of anything before enacted, it has remained intact through the years past as a model of regulatory legislation. The tide of further limitation and restriction of the liquor traffic has recently risen so high, that a great many states have lately taken action upon it, some enacting county and others state wide prohibition. Nebraska,

through this amendment, has elected to apply further restriction to the liquor traffic by limiting the time that liquor may be sold to those hours universally admitted to be the least objectionable of the twenty-four. The plan proposed in this amendment for the entire state has been tried in the capital city of Lincoln, and both 'wets' and 'drys' alike commend its effect. Business thrives in this city and the hotels and places of amusement claimed most to be affected are being continually improved and constantly crowded with patrons. It is admitted upon all sides that in this city it has had the effect of eliminating much of public rancor from the liquor question. This amendment has much opposition in the two Omahas, because business men are fearful that it will affect trade and commerce adversely, and for the further reason that it limits to a certain extent the policy of 'home rule' upon this matter. I believe, however, that experience will justify the law, and that our large cities will find that their prosperity does not depend in any way upon two or three extra hours for the sale of liquor. If the law is as wholesome in its effect as I believe it will be, it will give solid standing ground for those who believe in strict regulation as the best way to handle this question."

ATTORNEY GENERAL Wickersham has given an opinion that the national banks of Kansas have no right to participate in the assessments and benefits of the bank depositors' guaranty funds under the provisions of a recently enacted law by that state, on the same terms and conditions as apply to the state banks. The decision says that only an act of congress can confer such powers upon national banks. Referring to this opinion the Associated Press says: "The attorney general quotes from an opinion of Attorney General Bonaparte in the Oklahoma guaranty case that a national bank could not lawfully enter into the plan contemplated by the act, because it involved essentially a guaranty to the depositors of all state banks in Oklahoma and other national banks which might accept the terms of the act, that their respective depositors should be paid in full. This objection, he says, is not avoided in the Kansas law. The attorney general says he is strongly of the opinion that a national bank is without corporate power to expend its moneys to provide insurance that its depositors will be paid in full. It is indisputable, he says, that the assets of a national bank deposited as a condition to accepting the benefits of the act are subject to forfeiture in case it shall fail to comply with the requirements of the state bank commissioner under the act. He holds that such a contract as is proposed is wholly without the powers of a national bank and would expose its charter to forfeiture under section 5238 of the revised statutes."

THE COMMONER is asked to give publicity to a statement made by Antonio De P. Araujo, a Mexican citizen who with other comrades has been confined in the federal prison at Tombstone, Arizona, on the charge of violating the neutrality laws. Araujo's statement is addressed "to the American people" and follows: "It is hard to be sentenced as an innocent man to a long term of imprisonment in a strange country. It is in this unfortunate position that I find myself. But I have no regret and I address you in no spirit of despair. I have felt from the first that if the American people knew the truth about my case I would not now be in a convict's cell. But the American people do not know the truth. In fact but few of them know anything at all about my conviction. The silence of the press was a part of the conspiracy to destroy my activity by sending me to prison. For some time there has been trouble in Mexico growing out of the awful condition of the people. For this the administration of Diaz, backed by American capitalists, is responsible. Myself and comrades of the liberal party were opposed to the administration. We were persecuted, spied upon and hunted down until we had to leave the country. When we landed on this side of