

DOINGS OF THE WEEK

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Smith's Victory in California Seems to Make Nomination Certain.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

UNLESS most of the political prophets are sadly fooled, California last week settled the Democratic national convention at Houston, so far as the Presidential nomination is concerned. Few of them now venture any other prediction than that Al Smith has the prize all wrapped up, and it is generally believed that the rush to get into the band wagon will result in the nomination of the New York governor on the first ballot, probably by acclamation. The California primary was admittedly a test for Smith, for McAdoo strove to lead the dry Democrats of his state into the Walsh camp, and Senator Reed also was a live contender for the preference vote. But McAdoo fell down so badly that the Montana senator ran third, Reed standing in second place. Smith's victory was decisive, his vote being greater than the combined votes of the other two. With most of the precincts heard from, the result in round numbers was: Smith, 133,000; Reed, 58,000; Walsh, 46,000. Of the 58 counties, all but one were won by Smith. Imperial county was claimed for Reed. Former Senator James D. Phelan, head of the Smith delegation, has displaced McAdoo as the Democratic leader of California. The wets rejoiced in the apparent fact that the state had joined the wet column, but Dr. Arthur H. Briggs, head of the California Anti-Saloon league, asserted the wet and dry issue was not a determining factor in the fight.

Smith's delegates to Houston now number 497, this total including 157 uninstructed but known to favor him. He is expected to garner about 140 more in the next few weeks and to go into the convention with at least 635 votes. His managers believe the Ohio and Maryland delegations will be quick to shift to Smith, and that many of the Reed delegates also will climb into the band wagon promptly.

Wilbur Leggett of California, state manager for Reed, asked Josephus Daniels by wire if he would run for vice president on a third party ticket headed by Senator Reed or Senator Borah. Mr. Daniels replied that he would not accept a nomination on any third party ticket, and declared the only hope of wresting the government from the hands of "privilege and corruption" lies in a victory by the Democratic party. He said he intended to support the nominees of the Houston convention and believed enough dry Democrats would be elected to congress to guarantee no weakening of the prohibition laws.

Claude G. Bowers, an editorial writer of the New York Evening World and a political historian of note, was selected by the Democratic convention arrangements committee to be temporary chairman at Houston and to deliver the keynote speech. This choice had been expected.

HERBERT HOOVER was unopposed in the California Republican primary, but the Republicans flocked to the polls to vote for him in surprising numbers. The total G. O. P. vote cast was more than twice as large as the Democratic vote. The Golden state delegation of 29 gives Hoover an estimated total of 308 delegates to date, though 211 of these are uninstructed. His supporters now claim he will enter the convention with 526 votes, only 19 short of the necessary 545 majority. Last week the Tennessee Republican convention endorsed Hoover and also instructed the state's delegates at large to vote for Congressman J. Q. Tilson of Connecticut for vice president.

PROBABLY it will not cost as much to nominate and elect a President this year as it has sometimes in the past, for the senate has adopted a resolution for an inquiry into the campaign contributions and expenditures of both parties. The special committee named by Vice President Dawes includes Steiwar of Oregon, chairman;

Dale of Vermont, McMaster of South Dakota, Barkley of Kentucky and Bratton of New Mexico. Senator Robinson, the minority leader, who presented the resolution, made no charges of improper methods in the present pre-convention campaigns, but said it was considered desirable to have a committee go into the matter just as the Borah committee did in 1924 and the Kenyon committee in 1920.

BY A vote of 204 to 121 the house passed the Haugen farm relief bill, which is almost identical with the McNary measure passed by the senate. Both contain the equalization fee feature which is especially objectionable to the President, and it was taken for granted that he would veto the bill that comes out of conference. Nearly all the western and southern representatives voted for the Haugen bill. The eastern Republicans voted against it, but it was supported by a considerable number of Tammany Democrats.

Veto by President Coolidge also is expected for the flood relief measure which was reported to the house by the conference committee, since the conferees insisted on retaining the flowage rights feature to which he objects.

PARTY lines were drawn quite sharply when the senate began debating the tax reduction bill. Republicans on the finance committee had cut down the total reduction of the house bill from \$290,000,000 to about \$200,000,000, which is the limit placed by the Treasury department. The Democrats still insisted on a total reduction of \$325,000,000. The fight was mainly over the corporation tax, the Republicans wishing this cut from 13 1/2 to 12 1/2 per cent and the Democrats arguing for a cut to 11 or at most 11 1/2 per cent. The Democrats also would retain the graduated scale of rates for corporations with incomes of \$15,000 or less as voted by the house. Senator Smoot expected the debate in the senate would last over a week.

HARRY SINCLAIR appeared before the senate's Teapot Dome committee and told something of the Continental Trading company deal, but not near enough to satisfy the investigators. He fenced skillfully with Chairman Nye and the others and made few admissions except that he had received \$757,000 of the Continental's profits, which sum, with interest, he said he had recently turned over to the Sinclair Crude Oil Purchasing company. The committee is making up its report, but expects later to investigate the oil leases in the Salt Creek field.

RETURNING from Washington, where they attended the funeral of Floyd Bennett, the German-Irish transatlantic flyers were given the usual uproarious reception that New York accords to such celebrities. It included parades, banquets and valor medals and the aviators were almost worn out by the attentions showered upon them. Next they journeyed back to the national capital where they were officially welcomed to the United States by Secretary Kellogg with dignified ceremony. They lunched at the White House and President Coolidge pinned on their breasts the distinguished flying crosses which congress had voted them. In Arlington National cemetery they laid wreaths on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Among those who greeted them in Washington was Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, who had flown there in his "Spirit of St. Louis" for the purpose of placing that famous plane in the Smithsonian institution. Thursday Baron von Huenefeldt, Captain Koehli and Major Fitzmaurice flew to New York to arrange for their air tour of the East and Middle West.

Gen. Umberto Nobile and companions left Stolp, Germany, Thursday in the airship Italia for Spitzbergen, 1,700 miles away. The Italian explorers plan to make several flights over the polar regions during the summer.

DELEGATES from all parts of the world are assembled in Kansas City in attendance on the quadrennial general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church. They have a lot of business on hand, but it is not likely their doings will be tinged with sensationalism, since at the start they voted overwhelmingly against a formal dis-

cession of fundamentalism and modernism. In their episcopal address the 44 bishops recommended that full advantage be taken of the chance to assign responsibilities to younger members of the church. They held the possibility of a world union of Christian churches to be beyond consideration at present. Among the laity there is a strong movement for the democratization of the church government, including the election of bishops for a term of years instead of for life.

The conference approved a court of 17 members to try Bishop Bast of Copenhagen on charges arising out of his conviction in civil court of misusing church funds. Rev. Fred S. Stone of Chicago was chosen prosecutor.

CHIANG Kai-shek, generalissimo of the Chinese Nationalists, has moved his headquarters to Tsinan, capital of Shantung province, and is laying his plans for the final drive against Peking and the armies of Chang Tso-lin. It is reported that Chang has gathered 100,000 men in the vicinity of Tchow, where there is a large arsenal, and presumably the next big battle will be in that area. The situation between the Nationalists and the Japanese was relieved when the former agreed to reopen the Shantung railway and permit the Japanese troop trains to operate between Tsinanfu and Tainanfu. But the Nationalists in Shanghai are keeping up their anti-Japanese boycott.

JOHN BULL is likely to cancel his agreement to help Uncle Sam stop the smuggling of illegal liquor into the United States, for he is getting greatly peeved over the impetuous actions of some of the American rum chasers. Coast guard boats have been entering Bahama and Bermuda ports without warrant, and foreign ships have been seized by them allegedly without right. The British government made formal protest, and Secretary Kellogg, after replying in apologetic tone, ordered all coast guard craft to remain away from Bermuda ports. Only a few days ago, too, Canadian authorities complained that our enforcement agents in the Detroit area were firing shots that crossed the river and endangered the lives of Canadians. This was denied by Washington.

EGYPT isn't going to lose its independence just yet, but it must mind its step. Great Britain's protest against the Egyptian "public assemblies bill," which it was said would hamper the protection of foreigners, was followed up by the sending of several warships to Alexandria, and open threats to reduce the country again to a dependency. But the Egyptian government postponed consideration of the objectionable measure and the warships were called off. However, Foreign Secretary Chamberlain warned Egypt that there must be no revival of the controversy.

GERMANY has unqualifiedly accepted Secretary Kellogg's proposals for a multi-lateral treaty to outlaw war. The Berlin government endorses the plan enthusiastically and says it is ready to enter negotiations with the leading powers for the consummation of such a pact. The German note holds unfounded the French fear that an unconditional anti-war treaty would conflict with the League of Nations or a nation's right of self-defense, and takes the position that reservations to the American draft treaty are unnecessary.

PREMIER RAYMOND-POINCARÉ won a big victory in the French parliamentary elections and is assured of a working majority of about one hundred in the chamber of deputies. The country thus gave evidence that it wishes him to continue his task of putting its finances in order without interference from the radicals who had threatened his plans with destruction. As a preliminary to stabilization of the franc, the premier has announced a heavy loan to reimburse the Bank of France for advances to the state.

DEATHS of the week include that of Congressman Thaddeus Sweet of New York, killed in the crash of an airplane; and of Palmer E. Anderson, United States marshal for the northern Illinois district. Mr. Anderson has been succeeded by H. C. W. Laubenthal.

though quite the reverse, as we know, from fixed, the term is still used, because in the astronomically brief period from generation to generation, the changes are so slight that the naked eye is powerless to detect them.

Pretty Greek Legend

In Greek mythology Narcissus was a beautiful youth, a son of Cephalus and the nymph Liriope, metamorphosed into a flower. For his insensibility to love he was cursed by Nemesis to fall in love with his own im-

age reflected in water. Unable to grasp this shadow, he pined away and became the flower which bears his name. The nymph Echo, who vainly loved him, died from grief.

Talking Parrots

The Mexican double yellow head is probably the best talking bird among American parrots. This is probably equal to the African gray, which is the Old world favorite. Parrots must be taught to talk while young. Older birds learn little and very slowly.

THE OLD WEED WOMAN

(By D. J. Walsh.)

CUNA BORDEN was bending over her strawberry bed hunting for the first ripe berries. If she was successful in her search she was going to make a shortcake. She had just discovered a stem of luscious, big red berries when she heard some one coming into her garden. Turning, she saw Mrs. More, her neighbor from across the way.

"I just stopped in on my way to town, Cuna, to see if there was any errand I could do for you," and then as her eyes fell on the berries she exclaimed: "Ripe strawberries! Cuna, your garden is a wonder. It's way ahead of mine. I tell my husband that the sun always seems to shine warmer in your yard than anywhere else on this street. But all the same it's a shame that you have to live next door to old Mrs. Kerr. Her place will never be anything but an eyesore to the community as long as she lives. It spoils the whole tone of the street, let alone broadcasting seeds from every weed imaginable. I suppose we might just as well make the best of it. John says there is no law in this village that can compel a man to clean up his yard. And old Mrs. Kerr will never do a thing. She hates the neighborhood. She told Mrs. Fry the other day that she guesses one way and another she gets just as many weeds as she sows. The conversation trailed off into other channels and finally Mrs. More went on her way.

After Mrs. More had gone Cuna stood for several moments contemplating the adjoining yard. It was a shame, just as Betsy More had said, that nothing could be done to make old Mrs. Kerr clean up her yard. In the bright sunlight it looked as if it were covered with a fleece of fluffy white cotton, so thick was it strewn with dandelion blossoms gone to seed. Even as Cuna looked a puff of wind swooped down. An instant later the air was filled with a cloud of dandelion fluff. Each bit of fluff, as Cuna knew all too well, carried a tiny seed which eventually would appear as a full-grown plant in every carefully kept yard for several blocks. Cuna's eyes followed the flight of seeds. What was the use of all her labor year after year if old Mrs. Kerr's neglected yard was allowed to go on broadcasting weeds? She thought of the old lady herself, bent and gnarled with piercing, dark eyes, which, somehow, in their depths seemed to harbor such an unfriendly gleam. Mrs. Kerr had well earned for herself the title of 'The Old Weed Woman'. But what a dreadful thing it must be to be old and disliked. A moment later a thought came to Cuna that sent her flying into her house.

Two days later Mr. Gray, the greenhouse man, delivered a whole cartload of plants. All the rest of the day Cuna worked like a beaver setting out plants. Directly on the line which separated her lot from old Mrs. Kerr's she thickly set hollyhocks. These she flanked with phlox, zinnias, lupines, nicotines, pansies. Old Mrs. Kerr watched from her tiny back porch. Her attitude was belligerent. She meant her presence to warn Cuna not to set foot on her premises.

Weeks went by and Cuna's hedge began to bloom. It was a glowing beauty. People drove past the place in the evening just to catch a whiff of the fragrant nicotines that glowed like white stars in the moonlight. Cuna tolled, watered and watched. Her hands were calloused and blistered with weeding. Then one day a message came saying that her sister needed her. There was no time to think of anything. Cuna packed as quickly as she could and left without having time to bid Mrs. More good-by.

It was five weeks before Cuna again saw her home. She arrived on a late evening train and slipped into her house and to bed without even waiting to make herself a cup of tea. She slept profoundly.

Next morning Cuna was awakened by the sound of rain driving against her window. The sound made her want to snuggle down under the covers for another hour, but she was out of bed instantly. Her fingers fairly flew as she slipped into a house dress and twisted her dark hair and pinned it into place. Her one thought was of her garden. She had read that Pineville had been visited by a drought. Donning an old slicker and not waiting to put anything on her head she ran downstairs and out of the house. A moment later she stood staring in amazement at what she saw. Her garden was as neat and well cared for as if she had not been away even for one day. Her tomatoes were carefully trimmed and staked up. Her flowers had not suffered from the drought. That meant that some one had watered them. There was not a weed to be seen. The hollyhocks had grown tall and thick. They were covered

with a wealth of brilliant bloom. They completely hid the adjoining yard. A hoo-hooing from across the street caused her to turn quickly. It was Betsy More.

"When did you get home, Cuna?" Mrs. More called.

"Last night on the late train," Cuna answered. "But, Mrs. More what I want to know is, who it was that took such good care of my garden."

"Guess!" Mrs. More's eyes twinkled. "I can't," Cuna admitted.

"Just take a peek over in Mrs. Kerr's yard." Mrs. More laughed her good-natured laugh, "then I guess you'll have better luck guessing," and still smiling, Mrs. More turned and ran home.

Cuna parted a big bunch of hollyhocks and peeped through into the next yard. She gave an exclamation of surprise. She actually rubbed the rain out of her eyes because she thought she was not seeing right. Old Mrs. Kerr's yard was as well trimmed as her own. The grass had been clipped until it was as smooth as velvet. There was not a weed in sight. What did it mean? Cuna must find out. A moment later she was knocking at old Mrs. Kerr's back door. Almost instantly the door opened and the old lady appeared.

"Oh, Mrs. Kerr," Cuna cried as she bent forward and grasped the old lady's hand, "how can I ever thank you. You saved my flowers—I am so grateful!"

"Come in, child," Mrs. Kerr threw open the door and Cuna entered the tiny kitchen, which was filled with an appetizing odor of brewing coffee and browning toast. "Just sit ye down and have a snack of breakfast with me and I'll tell you all about it. I've had the nicest time. The only really happy time in years. I will confess that I was mad as hop the day I saw you setting things so close to my line. I resolved I'd destroy them the first chance I got. The day you went away I went out there with sickle and spading fork. I meant to do damage, but just as I was pressing my foot to the spading fork by glasses dropped off. I was just stooping to pick them up when I found myself looking straight into the face of the prettiest yellow pansy I'd ever seen since I was a little girl. My mother always had a bed of pansies and there was one particular yellow kind that I loved. I hadn't thought of 'em since she died—but there it was looking me straight in the eye. I—well—I just couldn't hurt it by destroying your plants—I got kinda in the habit of going out there mornings to see that it was all right. It was kinda company and I fell to weeding and when the drought came I carried out water so things wouldn't dry up. Then the flowers looked so sorta distressed by the side of the weeds in my yard that I had Able Cole come and clean up my yard. I thought it would be good for 'em to let the sun in from my side of the line. Well, one thing led to another until—until—"

"Until," Cuna interrupted. Her eyes were glistening; "Until, you old dear, you did the nicest possible thing you could have done—or anyone could, for that matter. I'll never forget it as long as I live."

"Neither will I," old Mrs. Kerr's eyes too were moist.

And that was how "The Old Weed Woman" of Pink street lost her title and Pink street won a neighbor and lost its weeds.

Signs in the Sky

A glorified "magic lantern," said to be capable of projecting photographs and signs onto the clouds, is the latest contribution to the science of advertising.

The device, still in its laboratory form, consists of a powerful searchlight mounted behind a series of lenses and a slide holder. The whole apparatus resembles a cannon, and is able to project images for a distance of five miles on a cloud bank.

The image is visible for miles around, while a revolving screen in front of the muzzle of the projector can be used to produce color-changing effects.

Boat Modeled on Fish

A young German inventor has designed a new type of speedboat after a thorough study of fishes. The screw is not, as usual, in the stern of the vessel, but in front, beneath the water, in a hollow or funnel in the ship's bow. The water sucked in by the screw is pushed through tubes on either side and is spouted through spouts opening in the middle of the vessel's sides. The hindpart is provided with protuberances resembling the scales of a shark.

Healing Balm

The balm of Gilead from the earliest antiquity had a reputation as a healing agent. The people of Gilead prepare it even at the present time for the benefit of pilgrims to the Holy land. This, however, is thought to be less likely to be the true balm than the juice of the styrax (Styrax officinalis), a common plant of Gilead, which in ancient times was much used for healing.

IN SYRIA



A Syrian Rebecca Returning From the Well.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

THE strip of Syria and the Holy Land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean sea has ever been a stage for momentous world events. There the civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor met, their armies marching and countermarching.

A few miles north of Beirut, at the point where Dog river enters the sea, the foothills of the Lebanon come down to the very shore of the Mediterranean, and since soldiers and armies have always sought to travel on the level, whether they have fought that way or not, the passage of this point where sea and mountain meet was always a difficult feat.

One army after another cut its path along the towering cliffs, and when the passage of this narrow defile was thus insured, the commanders left the record of their passing. Who the first men were no one knows, for the troops of Napoleon III, in passing this point, were too lazy to turn over a new leaf; they simply inscribed their record on a limestone page from which the record of some ancient Egyptian had been erased by the hand of time.

But the first record that still stands was left by the armies of the most famous of the pharaohs, Rameses the Great, when they were on their way northward to wage war against the Kheta or Hittites.

The great Assyrian, Ashurnasirpal, left his record here and his successors, Shalmaneser and Adadnirari, did the same. Then there was a lapse of more than a century, from 812 to 705 B. C., when Sennacherib and his son, Esarhaddon, had their names chiseled in this stone book of history.

Railways on Old Caravan Routes.

If political conditions become definitely stabilized in this part of the world, it is not too much to believe that heavy trains, fired with oil from the Persian fields, will thunder along trade routes which plodding camels marked out when the world was young. Already, one may dine in Cairo and have luncheon the following day in Jerusalem. The step to Aleppo, Mosul, and Bagdad is short and all but 300 miles of the line is now open to traffic. However popular the route through central Europe along the famous Berlin-to-Bagdad line becomes, the safety of the British empire demands that the railroad which follows the old line of communication between the valley of the Nile and the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris shall be kept in a state of perfection. There will be no Amanus or Taurus tunnels on this trail of the modern caravan, and an absence of heavy grades throughout a large part of the right of way will make it possible for the hoped-for Cairo-to-Calcutta express to beat the fastest sea route by several days.

The Hauran, south of Damascus, has long been a granary and the massive ruins of Baalbek dominate a plain whose fertility was once sufficient to make possible lavish local expenditures and at the same time return large taxes to imperial Rome, which used Syria not as a sinking place for public funds, but as a source of revenue for the treasury on the Tiber. When Rome ruled, this remote province had enough and to spare; but not for long did golden eggs from Syria enrich the greedy Turk.

Water holds a high place, not only in the view of the abstemious Mohammedan, but of the Syrian Christian as well. The main attraction of the Damascus cafe is a tiny fountain, whose sight and sound delight the son of the desert, vacationing in the urban oasis, or the Sarr of Samarkand, wearied by his desert march to Mecca, who stops here and dreams of his distant Zerafschan.

From Abraham to Allenby, Dan and Beersheba are popularly considered the terminal of Palestine, as they formerly were of Hebrew territory. One grew up around a source of the Jordan, the other owed its existence to the age-old wells whose limestone rims have been grooved and polished by a million bucket ropes. No hotel register attests so long and distinguished a line of guests.

From Abraham to Allenby, the ropeworn signposts that rim Beersheba's seven wells bespeak romance and passions broad as human life. Here Abraham arrived with Sarah, his wife, and being unused to town ways and fearing them, they registered as brother and sister. Later Sarah induced Abraham to drive Hagar and Ishmael out into the desert to die. Evidently cross-roads life did not improve Sarah's character.

Here Abraham, the father of his race, received a message to kill his only son, Isaac, and from this spot he set out with heavy heart to accomplish the task which he was saved from completing. Here Jacob robbed Esau of his birthright by methods that remind one of Launcelot Gobbo, and here he later stopped when, as an old man, he was on his way to visit his famous son, Joseph, in Egypt.

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A single spring determined the site of Nazareth, and Jacob's well still provides water in an otherwise thirsty land. To the tired traveler from the hills of Moab, the dirty Jordan seems a blessed refreshment after the dry ride; but Naaman, the leper, because he was accustomed to the crystal streams of his native city, scorned the coffee-colored flood which had been recommended as a cleansing agent.

Water bounds Syria on the west. The lack of it defines the eastern and southern boundaries. Many of the most pleasing pages of the Bible ripple with the songs of running brooks or praise the "still waters" of wells which have long marked the resting places of weary flocks and heavy-laden caravans.

Bathing in the Dead Sea. The Jericho region is supplied with three kinds of water, and this prodigality, coupled with the historic fame of the Jordan valley, has furnished a regular formula of bathing for pilgrims to this hot depression, nearly a quarter of a mile below the level of the sea.

Of course, every tourist has to bathe in the Dead sea; it is the thing to do. Lucky is the man whose skin does not crack in the heat of the valley, for Dead sea water on a cracked skin or the film of the eye reminds one of boiling oil and the Spanish inquisition. Having performed the necessary rite and dutifully completed an experience which can be recorded in the diary of the trip, the poor pilgrim, laved with a tenuous fluid that seems to be composed of salt, roseose, and lye, drives off to the Jordan and seeks relief in the muddy waters of that river. Then, as night rapidly settles in the deepest wrinkle on the face of Mother Earth, the tired traveler rides between the miserable hovels which constitute modern Jericho and dismounts at the Sultan's spring, once sweetened by Elijah.

The traveler who is wise will not try to sleep in the hot hotel, whose confining walls seem to radiate discomfort, but will stretch his bed beside the still waters of Sultan's pool.

Water or the lack of it must always affect the development of Syria, but the supreme value of the land as a link between the production centers of Europe and the population centers of Asia must always make trade routes and cross-roads of traffic the location for largest growth.

No "Fixed Stars"

The positions of the stars with reference to one another seem to remain constant, although they are continually changing their places relatively, to objects on the earth. Hence the term "fixed stars." But this is only seemingly the proper expression. In reality all are speeding through space at very high velocities, but so indelibly removed are the stars from us that they appear to be at rest. Al-