WHEN IS RECIPROCITY

For a whole week, the Congress debated the question of extending the life of a measure first passed in 1934 and first extended in 1937, under which the President is given power to enter into reciprocal trade agreements with other countries with further power to reduce the duties in the Tariff Act of 1930, but not to exceed 50% of the prevailing duty. When all is said and done, the argument sums up about as follows: Those favoring reciprocal trade agreements say that these agreements (i) have increased our foreign trade (2) have brought about healthier international relationships (3) are the surest avenue to peace (4) that they provide a speedy and efficient way of dealing with other nations and get away from the log-rolling practices of olden days when tariff acts were written in Congress. Those opposing these agreements say that (1) they have not improved our foreign trade (2) they have handed the American market to the foreign producer (3) they have permitted imports of competitive farm products at a time when we are paying benefits to reduce acreage in our own country (4) that American producers have not been given adequate consideration in the hearings before the Committee on Reciprocity Information (5) that such important agreements should be negotiated or at least confirmed by the elected representatives of the people (6) that they are unconstitutional (7) that they constitute a mixture of business and diplomacy, (8) and that the benefits which we accord to one country are available to all countries with whom we have a most-favored-nation status. In other words, strong contention is made that these agreements are not mutual in their benefits. Oddly enough, protection by adequate tariffs as against free trade has been a political issue since 1789.

IT MIGHT BE MOST INTERESTING

In the Washington telephone directory, one can find such advertisements as this: "See Ivan, Famous Seer, The Man Who Knows All." "Madame Lavok, Licensed Clairvoyant and Crystal Reader." "Matha, Remarkable Reader of Human Destiny." A member of Congress from Indiana has indicated that this is a species of racket which should be investigated and that he proposes to bring palmists, clairvoyants, numerologists and others before a Committee and ask them which horse would win in a certain race at a certain city on a certain day. He promised woe and grief if the soothsayers did not have the right answer. But now come more realistic persons who believe that inquiry might be made of these people, with the alleged gift of reading the future, about third terms and political prospects in November. If that should happen, the Committee dealing with this subject would suddenly find itself a focal point of interest.

A 1500 MILE PARK

The year 1941 will mark the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the Mississippi River by the Spanish explorer Hernando DeSota. A celebration of this event is already in the arrangement stage. But it remained for the Public Lands Committee of Congress to toss the real orchid into these proposals. After lengthy hearings, it has finally reported a bill to provide for a National Mississippi River Parkway which would extend from Lake Itasca, Minnesota, where the Father of
Waters rises to the Gulf of Mexico where it empties. The bill authorizes the Secretary of Interior to make surveys and maps regarding the location and cost of such a parkway. It would be a minimum of 200 feet wide and course thru ten states. The states affected would have to provide the right-of-way. The motor highway would run thru this wide parkway strip. It would be plunted with shrubs and no doubt fitted with places to park and eat lunch. It is proposed to dedicate the first section of this parkway in 1941 as a part of the quadrennial observance of DeSota's discovery. The bill has not yet passed either branch of Congress. The question of cost is troubling the legislators.

MCKINLEY'S LAST SPEECH

History has a way of echoing and re-echoing the sentiments and opinions of those who moulded the nation in other days. It finds forceful illustration in the week-long debate on the bill to extend the authority to continue the making of trade agreements with other nations. Time and again the name of the martyred President McKinley has been invoked to show that he was in reality the father of reciprocity. It was therefore interesting to go back to McKinley's last speech. It was delivered at the Pan American Exposition at Buffalo N.Y. on Sept. 5, 1901. It was also the fateful day of his assassination. McKinley did speak of reciprocity in that speech. He spoke of other nations as our customers. He spoke of the desirability of dropping tariffs when not needed for revenue or protection. But he uttered this significant sentiment: "We should take from our customers such of their products as we can use without harm to our industries and labor."

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES OF PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES

III.- Burton K. Wheeler - Democrat

United States Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana has been much in the public eye recently as a possible Democratic candidate for the Presidency and there are many who believe that he is one of the strongest candidates in the field. Senator Wheeler is now 68 and in excellent health. He was born at Hudson, Mass. and after receiving grammar school and high school education in the east, attended the University of Michigan law school. He at once migrated to the wide open spaces of Butte, Montana, and hung out the proverbial shingle and began to practice law at the age of 23. Two years later he married. In 1910 he was elected to the state legislature. Later he served for 5 years as U.S. District attorney. In 1922, he was elected to the United States Senate and is completing his 18th year in that body. The Wheeler's have 6 children. Senator Wheeler's legislative importance derives from the fact that he is chairman of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce. This is a powerful committee. It has jurisdiction over railroads, waterways, and a host of other important things. Senator Wheeler is a mixture of liberal and conservative. He fought vigorously against the court packing bill and has fought with equal vigor for liberal labor measures and other bills.