

# CURRENT TOPICS

A CURIOUS coincidence is reported from Mason county, Illinois. Thomas and William Mehan, twin brothers, died recently within the same week from cancer of the stomach. They were brought to Illinois as foundlings, grew up together, practiced law together, looked very much alike and died at practically the same age, of the same disease.

AN ASSOCIATED Press dispatch from Montgomery, Ala., follows: "For 'the removal of a civil cause from the court of this state to the federal court,' the license of the Southern railroad to do business in Alabama was cancelled by Secretary of State Julian Thursday evening, the formal announcement being made this afternoon. Although the action is productive of a condition similar to that existing in North Carolina, it differs in that it brings the matter to a direct issue between state and federal authorities, and is impossible of compromise as was the case in the Tarheel state. When Secretary Julian received a formal certificate from the clerk of the circuit court for Talladega county, which declared that the Southern railway had removed a case from that court to the United States court for the Northern district of Alabama, he immediately cancelled the license of the Southern. The penalty for the violation of the act which declares against the transfer of suits from state to federal courts is a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000, and imprisonment in the county jail, or hard labor in the county, for not more than twelve months, provided it is not intended to interfere with or prohibit the transaction of interstate business. Thus every employe of the Southern railway in Alabama is now subject to arrest under this section of the law. At just what point the administration will aim its first blow can not be ascertained at this time, but it is said on good authority that an arrest of several Southern ticket agents will bring the matter to a focus."

ANOTHER Montgomery dispatch six days later follows: "Governor Comer and the officials of the Southern railway reached an agreement late this afternoon, and the license of the railroad in Alabama will be reinstated. Beginning September 1, 1907, the railroad and its allied lines will put into effect the two and a half cent fare act and the measure of reducing the freight rates on 110 commodities commonly shipped in Alabama. The agreement was not reached without concessions being made by both sides, but in the main it is a victory for the state. The laws in question will not be put into effect permanently. The agreement specifically declares that their operation beginning September 1 are only subject to the final determination as to their constitutionality and their reasonableness, when a decision on these questions is finally rendered by the court of last resort."

FRANCIS MILES FINCH, author of the "Blue and the Gray" died recently at Ithaca, N. Y., his birthplace. Referring to Mr. Finch, a writer in the Brooklyn Eagle says: "The poem, republished on this page, is on death, and the death of the author causes its republication. It has been repeatedly printed wherever the English language is in use. Humanity knows the author by the poem. The legal profession knows him because he was for sixteen years an honored judge of our court of appeals. He was appointed to that court to fill a vacancy and was appointed for another vacancy by Alonzo B. Cornell for the same purpose. Incidentally Judge Finch's appointment was the only high one Governor Cornell ever made that gave unqualified satisfaction. After his second appointment Judge Finch was elected for fourteen years to the court of appeals, and when his term expired he was not renominated because he was within a few months of seventy years, the limit of elective judicial service in this state. Before and after his elevation to the bench he attended to the legal interests of Cornell university, and for the last eleven years of his life he was the head of its law faculty. His opinions, besides

being legally excellent, were written with a felicity of style as worthy of a jurist as of a poet, and the delight of readers of cultivation everywhere. He was a Yaleian of distinction, a lawyer of ability, a judge of marked learning, a poet of humanity, humor and patriotism, as well as of rare pathos, and as the head of the law department of his university he was an administrator and a teacher of a high order of excellence."

THE "BLUE and the Gray" which ought to have made its author more famous than he really was, follows:

By the flow of the inland river,  
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,  
Where the blades of the grave grass quiver,  
Asleep are the ranks of the dead;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Under the one, the Blue,  
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,  
Those in the gloom of defeat,  
All with the battle-blood gory,  
In the dusk of eternity meet;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Under the laurel, the Blue,  
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours  
The desolate mourners go,  
Lovingly laden with flowers,  
Alike for the friend and the foe;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Under the roses, the Blue,  
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So with an equal splendor  
The morning sun rays fall,  
With a touch impartially tender,  
On the blossoms blooming for all;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Brodered with gold, the Blue,  
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,  
On forest and field of grain,  
With an equal murmur falleth  
The cooling drip of the rain;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Wet with the rain, the Blue,  
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,  
The generous deed was done,  
In the storm of the years that are fading  
No braver battle was won;  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Under the blossoms, the Blue,  
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war cry sever  
Or the winding rivers be red;  
They banish our anger forever  
When they laurel the graves of our dead!  
Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day;  
Love and tears for the Blue,  
Tears and love for the Gray.

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the Houston (Texas) Post sends to his paper this dispatch: "It will be either Daniel and Carmack or Culberson and Carmack for first and second place on the next national democratic ticket for president of the United States to succeed President Roosevelt. No other combination is being seriously considered in Tennessee and many parts of the southwest now.' This was the statement made here today by prominent Tennessee and Mississippi politicians. They are sincere, apparently, in their belief that when democrats meet in convention next year to name a man to succeed President Roosevelt no other names will come before the conven-

tion but those of Daniel and Culberson for first place and Carmack for second place. A boom has been started to place the name of ex-Senator Edward Ward Carmack, who was recently defeated by Robert L. Taylor for re-election to the senate, on the next national ticket. Senator Carmack has just closed contracts for a long lecture tour which will begin early in October and which will lead him through all the territory available to further his nomination, and it is the belief of those behind him that before many months have gone by his name will figure conspicuously in democratic calculations. Negotiations are now said to be under way between party leaders in Tennessee and elsewhere looking to a conference to be held in this city in the near future, at which time it is said definite plans will be laid for keeping him prominently before the public eye. Senator Carmack gained his most noted distinction in his successful fight against the passage of the ship subsidy bill. In the closing hours of the last session of congress, when it seemed as if the bill would pass the senate beyond a doubt, having already passed the house, the brilliant Tennessean fought off the bill and so filibustered that it was impossible to secure its passage. The republicans in the senate, when that body was about to adjourn without having attended to some matters of vital importance, agreed to stop the fight for the session in order that appropriation bills and others equally important might receive attention. Thus Carmack succeeded in preventing the passage of a bill over which no hotter fight had been precipitated. It is said by those backing the Tennessee senator that just such a young and vigorous politician is needed to go on the ticket with Culberson or Daniel. He was elected to congress and served in the Fifty-fifth and Fifty-sixth sessions, and entered the senate in March, 1901. It is said that the people of Tennessee quickly recognized their mistake in retiring Senator Carmack, and that should he not make the second place on the national democratic ticket successfully he will be returned to the senate as the successor of Senator Frazier when the latter's term of office expires. The Tennesseans who are backing Carmack declare that it will surely be Daniel or Culberson when the convention meets."

A CAMPAIGN against the traffic in titles is being led by Hugh Cecil Lea, M. P., who has demanded a parliamentary inquiry into the circumstances under which certain peerages have been conferred, notably on Lord Michelham and Lord Northcliffe. Speaking to the London correspondent for the Chicago Inter-Ocean Hugh Cecil Lea said: "I have no sympathy under any circumstances with men who yearn for titles, but I contend that it would be far better to frankly publish a price list of such 'honors' than to confer titles on persons who have no distinction, nor, in fact, anything to recommend them for the peerage except that they have paid certain sums of money to their parties' campaign funds or into the bank accounts of persons of social distinction or of special power at court. If such a price list was frankly published any man able to pay down the sum fixed could go into any postoffice and take out a license to use a title just as he now takes out a license to keep a dog. Then the state would benefit financially, we would know where we are, and title hunting snobs would be placed on the proper footing. For, under the present system the acquisition of titles is associated with corruption and intrigue, and persons unfitted in every way to legislate are made irresponsible legislators. Talk about political graft in America, what could be more scandalous than the recognized party system here by which men who have never rendered any public service, never shown the slightest capacity for any duties, can buy the privilege of voting in the house of lords against the representative chamber, and so destroy its work? Lord Northcliffe tried to get elected to the house of commons and failed. Now he is a member of the house of lords. How did he earn the right to become a hereditary legislator? Arthur Balfour can tell, for Mr. Balfour was prime minister at that time. So with Baron de Stern, now Lord Michelham, of whom the public never even heard