

CURRENT TOPICS

SPEAKING OF early party symbols, a reader of Harper's Weekly says: "My attention has recently been called to an article in your issue of September 19, in which Mr. Albert Bigelow Paine credits Thomas Nast with inventing the donkey as the symbol of the democratic party. This statement, originally made by Mr. Paine in his book on Nast, under-rates the extent to which Nast utilized the symbols of the earlier American cartoonists. 'The first democratic donkey,' to use Mr. Paine's phrase, is to be found in a cartoon issued in 1837 representing Jackson as a modern Balaam riding an ass. The ass stands for the democratic-republican party of that day. Its progress is stopped by the Angel of the Lord brandishing a flaming sword, and Van Buren, stepping in its tracks, is saying that he follows in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor. Thus the democratic donkey originated in an application of the story of Balaam. The design recurs in modified form in the so-called 'shinplaster' caricature. A cartoon of the campaign of 1844 drawn by E. W. Clay, represents Tyler as trying to balance himself between a whip horse and a loco loco or democratic donkey. There were probably other uses of this symbol. At a later day Nast revived, consciously or unconsciously, the symbol used for the democratic party by the earlier cartoonists. In the caricatures of Jackson's administration the United States bank was represented as an elephant with Jackson twisting its tail. The elephant Nast used for the republican party."

ARARE OLD book is in the possession of Edward Young, 670 St. Antoine street, Detroit, Mich. It is a volume of 400 pages and has been handed down in the Young family through nearly two centuries. The Detroit correspondent for the New York Herald says: "The book, old and yellow and much the worse for wear, is 'The Young Man's Companion; or, Arithmetic Made Easy.' The introductory announces that it contains 'Plain Directions for a Young Man to attain to Read and Write true English, with Copies in Verse for a Writing School, Judicious of Letters to Friends, Forms for making Bills, Bonds, Releases, Wills, &c. Likewise, Easy Rule for the Measuring of Board and Timber, by the Carpenter's Plain Rule, and by Fractions; with Tables for such as have not learned Arithmetic; And to compute the Charge of Building a House or any Part thereof. Also Directions for Measuring, Gauging and Plotting of Land by Gunter's Chain; and taking heights and distances by the Quadrant and Triangle. The Use of Gunter's Lin in Measuring Globes, Bullets, Walls, Cones, Spire Steeples, and Barrels; With the Art of Dialling and Colouring of Work within and without doors. Directions for Dying of Stuffs &c. Together with a Map of the Globe of the Earth and Water; and Copernicus's Description of the visible World. Also a Map of England; and to know which are Cities and their Distance from London, Choice Monthly Observations for Gardening, Planting, Grafting, Inoculating Fruit Trees, and the best Time to Prune Them; and the making Wine of Fruit; With experience'd Medicines for the Poor. An Account of Curiosities in London and Westminster.' The book was written by W. Mather 'in an easy Style, that a young Man may attain the same without a Tutor.' That the 'Young Man's Companion' was popular in its day is indicated by the fact that this was the thirteenth edition, 'with many Additions and Alterations, especially of the Arithmetick, to the Modern Method.' The 'Companion' was 'printed in London for S. Clarke, the corner of Exchange Alley, next Birchin Lane, 1727.' Adorning the fly leaf are the names of several into whose possession the book found its way, beginning with Anthony Linnis, in 1730. It is fairly bursting with information, although in this day and age it is difficult to see how a considerable portion of it possessed any especial interest for young men."

A WRITER IN the New York Independent recently gave an interesting study of bees saying, among other things: "If you put a bee and some honey, pollen and water under a glass,

the insect does not take the slightest notice of the food and dies in a futile effort to escape."

ALBERT R. LEDOUX, of Cornwall, N. Y., writes to The Independent to challenge this statement. Mr. Ledoux says: "This is entirely the reverse of the experience of every bee-hunter. Convey a worker, seeking honey from a flower, to a glass or cup containing it, it almost instantly settles on the comb and gorges itself. Remove the cover, the bee flies straight for home, unloads and returns, again and again. Bees do not seem to go to special fields, 'as ordered.' They will be found on near-by flowers in the early morning, or on the sunny side of a hill; then gradually extend their range until afternoon. If you catch a bee before 9 a. m. you may be reasonably sure its hive is comparatively near. By 3 o'clock they may be miles from home. It is by the sense of smell that they are guided to the extra, unexpected store, not by the order of any 'explorers' or 'council.' Go into a field where flowers have been killed by a sudden overnight frost. By 9 or 10 o'clock the bees are there, in the accustomed pasture; but no store rewards them today. Now burn some honeycomb on a heated stove and place some more on the rocks. Up the wind come the workers, circle about and light on the comb and fill themselves. Every bee-hunter knows this. Finally, when your pail is full of bees working on honeycomb, coming and going, close the lid and carry them off half a mile. If on the line, the bees you then release will return straight to the pail, after unloading at the hive. If off the line, they will first return to the original stand; then, not finding the pail, they will come to the new stand and again attack the comb."

WYALUSING, Grant county, Wis., boasts of what is said to be the instance of a family of six generations all living. The progeny of this family are scattered over Iowa and Illinois. The Mason City (Iowa) correspondent of the New York Herald tells the story as follows: "The woman who stands at the head of these generations and has established this unparalleled record is Lydia Thomas Ault Shrake, who has attained the age of ninety-five years, yet is remarkably well preserved, and fondles the child of her sixth generation as if it were her own. One other remarkable thing is that every one of the six generations is a female. For many years most of the members resided within the township of Wyalusing, and have lived, many of them, within ten miles of each other since their birth. The more indirect descendants are scattered all over the northwest. One would think that the time of six generations would extend over at least two hundred years, figuring on the allotment of mankind of thirty-three years. But it is not so in the Shrake family. All the girls were married early in life, as the record will show, and all gave birth to children, and this fact has narrowed the time limit down to ninety-five years. 'Grandma' Shrake now numbers 167 direct descendants and the world is challenged to produce its equal. Baby Gulley, recently born, is the youngest member of the family. The youngster is blessed with more grandparents than any living child. With so many grandparents the question naturally arises, what will pretty little Baby Gulley be? This is a condensed record of these six generations: First generation, Mrs. Lydia Thomas Ault Shrake, born in Connellsville, Pa., in 1814. Married at eighteen to William Ault. To this union were born five children. Mr. Ault died in 1839 and two years later Mrs. Ault was married to Jacob Shrake and to this union were born five children. 'Grandma' Shrake sent five sons to the civil war, and her last husband was a veteran of the war of 1812. Second generation, Margaret Ault-Elder, born in 1835, married at fifteen, and is the mother of ten children, seven of whom are living. Third generation, Rachel Elder-Goff, born in 1851, married at seventeen. She is the mother of twelve children, seven of whom are living. Fourth generation, Melissa Goff-Spaulling, born in 1872, married at fifteen, mother of three children, all

living. Fifth generation, Cora Spaulling-Gulley, born in 1891, married at fifteen; mother of one child. Sixth generation, Agnes Elder Goff Spaulling Gulley, born August 5, 1908."

A "LABOR DINNER" was arranged for the White House November 17. The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald referring to that dinner said: "In distributing the invitations Mr. Gompers, president of the American Federation; Frank Morrison, its secretary; Treasurer John B. Lennon and Third Vice President James O'Connell are omitted from the list. Barred with them are other members of the organization who supported Mr. Gompers in his fight during the last campaign. While much emphasis will be given the omission of these names, the president feels that he will be able to secure an accurate statement of the views of labor from the leaders who will be his guests. Among those who are understood to have been invited to the dinner from labor's list are John Mitchell, formerly president of the mine workers and now a vice president of the American Federation of Labor; T. V. Powderly, formerly head of the Knights of Labor and now an official of the department of commerce and labor; F. H. Morrissey of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen; Grand Chief Engineer Stone of the Locomotive Engineers; President Faulkner of the Amalgamated Window Glass Workers of America; Secretary Dolan of the International Association of Steam Shovel Men; President Keefe of the Longshoremen's Union; Vice President Duncan of the American Federation of Labor, who is also the head of the Granite Cutters' International Association; Attorney Gavegan of the Central Building Trades' Association of New York, and a number of others."

REFERRING TO the White House "Labor dinner" Samuel Gompers, speaking to a correspondent for the Associated Press at Denver, said: "I am honored by the president when he excludes me from his guest list. It is a high tribute to the manner in which I have represented the interests of the millions of workingmen and women banded together in the federation, both in the matter of pressing the administration for fair labor legislation and in the political campaign just ended. This is the first affair of the kind that I know of at the White House to which I have not been invited, but despite the fact that I have frequently been asked to meet the president and his friends socially, I have never availed myself of such an invitation. My dealings with the president have always been on a strictly business basis. I have frequently requested an audience with him regarding matters of import to the federation and its membership and have always been well received and treated courteously. There, however, my relations with the president ended. I, by virtue of the trust imposed upon me by the Federation, represent the millions of people of the country who toil with their hands—the hired men and women, so to speak. If the president or any other person cares to say that I do not represent the membership of the American Federation of Labor, so be it; I don't care to become involved in a controversy or criticize such a stand. When the need presents, I shall meet President Roosevelt or any other president or public man as the representative of the workers of the nation if they re-elect me and care to have me represent them." The Federation officials decline to discuss the matter, but many labor leaders gathered in Denver declare that the action of the president is simply a part of a plan to divide the forces of organized labor so they would not be effective in future contests.

REFERRING TO Mr. Roosevelt's letter on "Religion and Politics," the Chicago Record-Herald says: "President Roosevelt's letter, giving his views on the relation between religion and politics, and declaring that it was 'an outrage to agitate such a question as a man's religious convictions with the purpose of influencing a political election,' struck a responsive chord among the clergy of Chicago when