

CURRENT TOPICS

IF SENATOR KNOX becomes secretary of state under Mr. Taft something must be done to cure his ineligibility. The constitution provides that a senator shall not be eligible to appointment to any office which was created or the salary of which was increased during his senatorial term. Senator Knox with other senators voted to increase the pay of cabinet members from \$8,000 to \$12,000 per year. Paragraph two of section 6 of the constitution says: "No senator or representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States which shall have been created or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office."

WHILE EVERY one admits that the constitution is explicit President Taft might appoint Mr. Knox in spite of his ineligibility and the senate could confirm it. There are in fact two precedents in which this constitutional provision was ignored. The Philadelphia Public Ledger says: "The late Matt Ransom was a senator from North Carolina when the salary of ambassadors was raised from \$12,000 to \$17,500 a year. He voted for the increase. Subsequently, and within the term for which he was elected, he was appointed ambassador to Mexico. The senate promptly confirmed him and he served as ambassador. The case of the late Senator Wolcott, of Colorado, was similar. He voted for the creation of the monetary commission which President McKinley sent to Europe to study bimetalism. But he was made a member of the commission and the senate confirmed him."

SENATOR Hale, of Maine, has introduced a bill providing that the salary of the secretary of state shall be restored to the old figure, \$8,000. This bill is intended to cure Senator Knox's ineligibility. Should it pass the secretary of state in the Taft administration would receive per year \$4,000 less than that received by other cabinet officers. The Associated Press dispatches of February 12 said that it was likely Mr. Knox would not accept the offer, feeling that by the passage of the Hale bill his ineligibility would be cured by subterfuge. But the Hale bill passed both houses and Mr. Knox will accept.

HERE IS AN interesting bit of news furnished by the Washington correspondent for the New York Herald which shows how devoted Mr. Roosevelt is to a high principle: "President Roosevelt has forgiven at least one federal office holder for 'pernicious activity' in politics during the recent presidential campaign. He is Harry H. Myers, of Brinkley, Ark., and his nomination as registrar of the land office at Little Rock, Ark., was confirmed today. Mr. Myers held the position in the Little Rock office last October. Protests came to the president about that time charging Myers with the grossest kind of political activity, 'pernicious' and every other kind. The president had made a rule and he had to stand by it. So he removed Mr. Myers from office, or, to be more accurate, that official resigned. Lewis B. Eddy was appointed in his place. But the election was over long before December 14, and on that day Mr. Myers was nominated 'to fill a vacancy caused by his resignation,' and 'vice Lewis B. Eddy, temporarily appointed.'"

THE NEW YORK Herald of Thursday, February 11, prints the following: "At a dinner of the alumni of Manhattan College in the Hotel Knickerbocker last night Mgr. George W. Mundelein urged the election of a Roman Catholic as president of the United States, and praised Theodore Roosevelt as the first president who had ever recognized Roman Catholics and appointed them to high office. More than two hundred alumni of the college were present and cheered the speaker enthusiastically. 'There has never been a president in the White House,' he said, 'who has had more regard and fair-

ness for the Catholic church than President Roosevelt. He has shown it by his fearless appointment of Catholics to high office. He's a man—a doer of big things, a clever politician, but a successful statesman. There is no other living American whose name is so well known in foreign lands, and particularly in the Vatican.' Mgr. Mundelein spoke, he said, for the Roman Catholic church. He recently returned to this country after a third special trip to confer with Pope Pius X., representing the New York diocese of the church. Deploring the fact that President Roosevelt will soon leave office, he said the church considered itself fortunate in his successor, as, he said, 'Mr. Taft has broad views, an honest purpose, and has made good wherever he has been.' 'His relations with the Vatican,' the speaker continued, referring to Mr. Taft, 'will be friendly and fair. They have had proofs of his service and they ask no more than that.' Referring to the possibility of electing a Roman Catholic, president, the speaker said: 'Give us a Catholic, able and honest and just and give him the solid support of a united party and I believe he would be elected hands down, even now. The American people are just. We are the only people who have never dragged religion into politics. The Vatican trusts that it will never see the day that such is the case. We want our rights, that and nothing more. We want and demand the privileges granted to us by the constitution. We are fourteen million strong and all we ask and what we want is the free exercise of our faith, no discrimination against us and a square deal. And the man who gives us that we will vote for in the future as in the past, be he Catholic, Protestant or Jew.'"

NOW THAT the cruise of the American battleship fleet has been completed the following by the Washington correspondent of the New York World will be interesting: "In round numbers the cruise of the battleship fleet, when it is finished at Hampton Roads on February 22, will have cost the American people \$20,000,000. That cost is figured on the prices prevailing in the latter part of 1905. The 16,000 men aboard have spent about \$6,400,000—an allowance of \$400 for each officer and man, spread over fourteen months. The repair bill, after the ships reach their home ports, is expected to run up to between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000. Rear Admiral Arnold's third squadron of the Atlantic fleet, now concentrating at Guantanamo, is under orders to leave there between February 8 and 10 to meet Rear Admiral Sperry's sixteen battleships, which are to leave Gibraltar February 6. Somewhere in the broad Atlantic the ships of the several squadrons will get into wireless communication with each other, and then, with Arnold's ships as an escort, the vessels will proceed to Hampton Roads. With good weather they may reach the Virginia capes two days ahead of time. Arnold's squadron consists of the battleships Maine, Mississippi, New Hampshire and Idaho and the scout cruisers Chester, Birmingham and Salem."

THE MEDICAL WORLD, published at 1520 Chestnut street, Philadelphia, is primarily for doctors. Its editor says, however, that it is "not merely a medical journal; it is a journal for doctors—and pity the doctor who is only a medical man." The editor of the Medical World, Dr. C. F. Taylor, supported Mr. Bryan during the recent campaign. By some of his readers he was commended and by others he was condemned. Justifying the attention The Medical World pays to politics and other subjects aside from medicine, Dr. Taylor says: "As to politics and religion, they are a part of our life—a part of a doctor's life as well as any other person's life. Let us be fraternal and mutually helpful and mutually tolerant and forbearing in these things as well as in our narrower professional life and interests. Since President Roosevelt has spoken so bravely (since the election) upon religion and the presidency, I asked a good historian, a profound biblical student of my acquaintance, to write up a series of articles on 'The Religion of the Presidents,' devoting a column to each and one for each month beginning with Washington, but he did not have

the time, and could not refer me to any one else competent to take up the task. I wish I had time to attempt the task myself, but it would take much time, investigating, consulting with scholars, etc.; so I guess I will have to let it go. Are you shocked, doctor, that I had such a thought, for a medical journal? Well, I think our readers are broad enough to welcome such a thing. As to Mr. Bryan, a very large number of the citizens of this country have insisted on an opportunity to vote for him for president. His candidacy the first time was the result of a spontaneous demand in the convention; the other two times the demand for his candidacy came directly from the voters of his party. And his life has been an open book, both politically and personally. The many marks of esteem for him by those who know him best, among them being his remarkable reception when he arrived from abroad, one hundred picked men of Nebraska, those who knew him best, going to New York to escort him home, and the fact that he carried his precinct, city, county and state in the last election, his defeat in the nation being due to the united opposition of the capitalistic elements—these and many other things quite offset what you say about him. But the election is all past now, and civilization would go along much the same if a dozen Bryans or a dozen Tafts were defeated for the presidency. We should not give too much importance to men, personally. We have thousands of good men, and they can't all be president. I have a plan which will work better than the election of any man to the presidency. The power of combined capital against the interests of the masses must be finally combated by more power directly in the hands of the people, by means of the initiative and the referendum, first in the states, and then in the nation."

ALREADY MR. TAFT has shown indications of over-ruling the Roosevelt administration. Mr. Roosevelt called the president's home the "White House," but under the Taft administration it is to be known as the "executive mansion." The Washington correspondent for the New York World explains: "The program for the inauguration ceremonies was made public this evening. 'On reaching the platform,' the program reads, 'the president and president-elect will take the seats reserved for them, the chief justice on their right and the committee of arrangements and the sergeant-at-arms of the senate on their left. On the conclusion of the address the members of the senate, preceded by the sergeant-at-arms, vice president and the secretary of the senate will return to the senate chamber, and the president, accompanied by the committee of arrangements, will proceed to the executive mansion.' Notice the use of the words 'executive mansion' to designate the president's residence. All of Roosevelt's messages to congress have been dated from 'the White House.' No president before Mr. Roosevelt entirely dropped 'executive mansion' from his state papers. There is a general preference among senators and representatives for the old form, and the program indicates a return thereto if it meets the approval of Mr. Taft. Customs and precedents have been closely followed in arranging the program for the inauguration."

IN THE FEBRUARY number of the Medical World the following letter appeared: "Robinson, Ill., January 16, 1909.—I inclose check for \$1 for 1908, and ask that you discontinue your journal. Should I ever decide I want another Bryan paper, will take The Commoner. Yours truly, T. N. Rafferty." Replying to this letter Dr. Taylor said: "Certainly, doctor, let me present The Commoner to you for this year. I will order it sent to you and order the bill sent to me. I will guarantee that it will do you no harm, for The Commoner has come to me since its first issue, and I am sure it has contained many good things; and its influence upon the political thought and action of this country has been very great. I will grant you that there are too many Bryan worshippers, if you will grant me that there are too many Bryan haters. I will also grant, if you will, that