

CURRENT TOPICS

JAMES R. DAY, chancellor of the Syracuse University, the gentleman who referred to "anarchy in the White House" because of President Roosevelt's Standard Oil message, made some decidedly interesting remarks in his baccalaureate sermon. Chancellor Day said that a government by the people becomes a misnomer and a deception "when senators and representatives receive orders from the executive and when appeals to popular passion are made to force them to action to which their sound judgment and honest convictions are opposed." The chancellor made a defense of corporations, saying that the poor man owes more to corporations than to any other commercial force. He declared that this is the day of the scandal-monger and denounced those who had criticised the methods of the packers.

VERMONT WILL CHOSE a governor at the fall election and the Philadelphia Public Ledger says: "Actually democrats see a ray of hope for carrying the state." The Public Ledger adds: "The fact that the lowest majority the republicans have had since 1872 is 14,163 does not cool the ardor of the Green Mountain democrats. The republicans are having great difficulty in choosing a candidate as successor to Governor Bell. There may be two republicans in the field. In 1902 the democrats polled 7,364 votes; republicans, 31,864, and prohibitionists, 2,498. The vote in 1904 for governor was, democrat, 16,566; republican, 48,115; socialist, 769, and prohibition, 1,175. The democrats are harmonious and hopeful. In James E. Burke, the blacksmith mayor of Burlington, who is serving his fourth term the democrats have a candidate who is likely to make a strong appeal. Aside from the regular party support Mr. Burke expects to win over many independent republican and labor voters. He appears to be a particularly attractive personality in Vermont politics. Working regularly at the forge he has obtained at the same time a wide knowledge of books and men. Without the means to make an extended campaign, he proposes to go back to 'the plain ways of politics,' when an individuality counted more than a generous campaign fund. New England has not lost her liking for her Elihu Burritts. The fact that Mr. Douglas had been a cobbler before becoming an effective tariff-reform advocate helped him to the governorship of Massachusetts."

THE LATE William F. Switzler of Missouri, had an intimate acquaintance with Thomas H. Benton. A writer in the Columbia (Mo.) Herald says that of all the men Colonel Switzler knew, he could talk, perhaps, the most entertainingly about Thomas H. Benton. The Herald quotes Colonel Switzler as having said: "Benton was a most remarkable man. In some respects the most remarkable I have ever known, but he could not begin a career at this time. The people would not tolerate him. He would pass even a stranger by his appearance. He stood as if he owned the earth. With head tilted at an angle of 45 degrees and hands behind his back he would stalk with measured tread down the street, looking neither to the right, nor to the left, recognizing no one. If he had an appointment to speak at 2 o'clock, promptly at 1 o'clock he would arrive. He would come in his carriage unattended. He would permit no one to introduce him. But, passing through a crowd, he would make his way to the rostrum and begin, 'Citizens.' Never did he say 'Fellow citizens.' Those before him were no fellows of his. And when he had concluded he would make his way back to the hotel, without personally addressing a soul in his audience. No one dared interrupt him in his speech. He refused to recognize the right of any constituent to ask him how he stood on any subject."

NINETEEN YEARS AGO William Pinkney Whyte, recently appointed to succeed the late Arthur P. Gorman as United States senator, was nominated by the democrats of Maryland to be attorney general of his state. On that occasion, Mr. Whyte said: "The attorney gen-

eralship would be an excellent way for me to close my public career." Referring to this the New York Evening Post says: "Mr. Whyte was then a youth of sixty-three. At the expiration of his term in 1891 he retired to practice law and enjoy his reputation as Maryland's most distinguished citizen. His choice now by Governor Warfield as Gorman's successor in the United States senate is an admission that even at eighty-two Mr. Whyte is still the state's foremost democrat. If the new appointee lives to complete his term, in 1909, his public career will have extended over sixty-two years, for he first went to the Maryland legislature in 1847. His first appearance in the senate, when he was appointed by Governor Swann to the seat made vacant by the resignation of Reverdy Johnson, was in 1868. A term as governor, a full term as United States senator, and two terms as mayor of Baltimore preceded his election to the attorney generalship in 1887. If, as 'Mr. Dooley' asserted, 'th' entrance of Beveridge into th' senate at th' age of six reduced th' average age of that body to 92.' Mr. Whyte's reappearance will help to restore the former impression of maturity. Still, he is nearly two months younger than Senator Morgan and more than three years younger than Senator Pettus—Alabama's wise counsellors who blithely talk of re-election in 1907 and 1909 respectively. Dr. Osler has evidently left Maryland for good."

A BILL HAS BEEN introduced in the house of commons, requiring "all railway companies and all steamship companies in the United Kingdom to afford, free of charge, facilities to all members of both houses of parliament to travel between their usual place of residence and London for the discharge of their parliamentary duties." This measure is supported by a number of influential members of parliament. The New York Evening Post quotes from the London Economist a satirical reference to this measure as follows: "As legislators necessarily wear out a certain amount of shoe leather when they walk down to Westminster, it is to be presumed that the next proposal will be to compel shoemakers to supply them with free boots and shoes—a proposal that would not be a whit more extravagant than the legislative project which seeks to render it obligatory on the proprietors of railways to bear their traveling expenses. It may, of course, be argued that railways, unlike other traders, are the holders of public franchises. But these franchises were granted under well-defined conditions, which are not to be altered at the mere caprice of legislators. The bill is backed, among others, by Mr. Rothschild, Sir Christopher Furness, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Edward Sassoon, and the idea of railway companies being required by law to give these gentlemen free tickets is more in keeping with the traditions of comic opera than with the dignity of public life. It is to be noted, moreover, that peers are under the bill, to share in the joys of free passes, so that the number of legislative 'deadheads' created if the measure became law would be considerably more than a thousand."

NATHAN COLE of Los Angeles is prominently mentioned as the democratic nominee for governor of California. The Los Angeles News says: "Nathan Cole is the choice of the democrats of southern California for governor. Chairman Spellacy has a high admiration for him and it is thought will not oppose his candidacy. Mr. Cole is vice president and general manager of the Pacific Sugar company, and never held political office. His work in the San Joaquin valley, where he is building a sugar refinery, is regarded as a splendid building movement and has made his name familiar in that section." Mr. Cole says he is not a candidate for the position, but it is plain that his friends will make an earnest effort to bestow upon him the honor. Referring in a general way to the California contest, Mr. Cole—in a newspaper interview recently published—said: "In the state fight there will be large independent voting, and if the party furnishes a clean ticket and a progressive platform thousands of republicans will vote the democratic ticket this

fall. The democratic party can not go backward; it must go forward. It must be radical; it can no longer be conservative. If you asked my opinion as to the platform, I would say: First—A declaration in favor of government ownership of railroads, telegraphs and express companies. Second—A declaration in favor of municipal ownership of all public utilities. Third—A declaration in favor of direct legislation and the recall. Fourth—A declaration in favor of an honest and businesslike administration of state affairs, with due regard to party, but with all regard to the people."

A LAW PROHIBITING the trimming of hats with birds' wings and feathers will go into effect in Iowa July 1. The law provides that any milliner trimming a hat with feathers or wings of other than game birds shall be punished by a fine. Referring to this law, the Sioux City Journal says: "Milliners all over the state have thrown up their hands in holy horror at this latest blow to the aesthetic in dress. In several cities of size meetings of the women with the thimble and thread of the art of hats have been held at which words of indignation streamed from every female present. In Des Moines an indignation meeting was held at which many incendiary views were expressed, the sense of the meeting being that the milliners of the state unite in their wrath and bring upon those horrid legislators all the grief possible. There is always the humane society side of the law to look at. There are men who have no grudge against milliners because of the monthly bills, but who would rather see a well turned wing of red or blue against its natural background, the green of the woods, than glued on a hat at an impossible angle above the prettiest pair of eyes that ever twinkled."

JOHN BUNYAN will have grounds for a grudge against President Roosevelt as long as Pilgrim's Progress endures, according to a writer in the Lincoln (Neb.) Journal. The Journal writer explains: "As was frequently remarked at the time of the president's now famous muckrake speech, the muckraker of Bunyon was not a stirrer up of scandal, flinger of filth into people's faces, but the man who devoted himself to the acquirement of filthy lucre to the neglect of higher things. In the spirit of Pilgrim's Progress the man with the muckrake would be Mr. Rockefeller himself, not the exposé of Rockefeller. In a sense it is unfortunate that the term came thus to be misapplied, for no better word for the money grubber could have been found than the title of muckraker. On the other hand the word, with its unsavory significance, does an injustice when applied to the numerous authors whose literature of exposure has hastened greatly the day of cleansing. But as the battle of Breed's hill can never be anything to Americans but the battle of Bunker Hill, because they got started to calling it that way, so the muckraker will always be a Lincoln Steffens instead of a Russell Sage."

CHARLES L. TUCKER, who was electrocuted June 11 at the Massachusetts state prison charged with the murder of Mabel Page, insisted that he was innocent of the crime. The clergyman who attended him and many friends were convinced of his innocence and urged Governor Guild to commute his sentence. The governor declined. Tucker's last words were: "I hope God will forgive me for all the wrongs I have ever done in my past life. I forgive everybody who has ever wronged me. I am at peace with my Maker." He also left a letter addressed to one of his attorneys in which he declared: "I have been misjudged and wrongfully accused of a crime that I know nothing about, one that I am entirely innocent of." Tucker's letter concludes as follows: "It is awful to die when one is innocent, and when one is so young, good hearted and healthy. Oh, I am so glad that I am innocent, dear James; one feels much better when one's conscience is clear. I would tell you willingly if I were guilty and I would make my peace with God, but I am not James, and I die innocent as a child unborn of this crime. I am