

CURRENT TOPICS

SENATOR OWEN of Oklahoma proposes to incorporate in the federal law this provision: "Whenever the laws of any state provide for the insurance of the deposits in the banks of such state and provide further that the national banks of such state may be permitted to enjoy the benefit of such law any national banking association within such state is hereby authorized to avail itself of the benefit of such law upon a vote of a majority of the stockholders of such national banking association at a meeting called for that purpose; provided that the cost of such insurance shall be paid out of their undivided profits and shall not diminish the capital or surplus of such banks."

MR. BRYAN made an extended visit to the national capital. He took part in the Gridiron dinner given by newspaper correspondents, on Sunday delivered several addresses in Washington City churches, and during the week met many senators and representatives. Senator Newlands of Nevada gave several dinners to senators and members, Mr. Bryan being a guest.

ON THURSDAY, January 30, Mr. Bryan appeared before the house committee on the elections and spoke in support of the Belmont bill which requires the publication of campaign contributions. Under date of Washington, January 29, the Associated Press said: "While William J. Bryan was occupied today in conversation in the speaker's lobby, Mr. Wallace of Arkansas on the floor of the house was delivering an eulogy of him. As no candidate and no man was without fault, he said, so no candidate may be without weaknesses. It was charged, he said, that Mr. Bryan talked too much. 'I'll admit, sir,' he declared, 'that is too common an evil. Too much talk by a man who can talk is a most grievous fault in the eyes of those who can not talk. The remedy, perhaps, was to 'print.' They say he has made mistakes,' said Mr. Wallace. 'They say he is a radical. What reformer is not?' he inquired. 'They say he is dogmatic, independent. Who would have him obedient, subservient?' He thanked God there was no earthly prince who at noonday can proclaim 'it is night' and have William J. Bryan forthwith declare that he sees the moon and the stars.' 'It has been said,' Mr. Wallace declared, 'that Mr. Bryan can not carry this or that state. He may not be elected or may not carry a state here and there,' he remarked, 'but I say he will do better; he will convince the world of his manhood.' This utterance aroused the democrats to loud applause. 'I will say,' he repeated, 'he will carry conviction to all the states and that he bears within himself the elements that make the world proclaim him a man worthy the honor and suffrage of all the states.' Mr. Wallace was frequently interrupted by democratic applause."

PLAINLY THE editor of the Chicago Inter-Ocean (rep.) is a badly frightened gentleman. Recently the Inter-Ocean printed this editorial: "The effort of a group of eastern financiers in politics to force Mr. Bryan to relinquish the democratic nomination has met with the rebuff predestined for it by its foolish character. Mr. Bryan has simply refused to even discuss the question. And the personality and the proclamations of these people have strengthened Mr. Bryan with the democratic masses. The plain truth is that there is no longer a democratic party save that radical party which Mr. Bryan, with much republican assistance, has created and of which he is the only figure of national dimensions. And this democratic party is rapidly making for itself an organization. It is getting together around Mr. Bryan all over the country. And it draws to itself all the elements of radical discontent and all the rainbow chasers of instantaneous 'reform' propagated by the compromises of republican leaders with socialism and by the agitations carried on under republican auspices. As a result of the situation thus created the chances of Mr. Bryan and his party winning the presidency have never been better since midsummer of 1896, before the republican campaign of education had begun

to sober delirious enthusiasm, than they are today. Mr. Bryan sees this. It is plain as the midday sun to all who look the facts in the face. If the election were held today it is quite probable that Mr. Bryan would win. The republican party can meet and change this situation in the next nine months. The task will be hard. It demands close organization, strict discipline, a most energetic campaign of education, plenty of hard work—and then more hard work. The Inter-Ocean is confident that the republican party will meet it as it must be met, and that the American people's fundamental common sense will triumph over irrational radicalism. But the situation has not yet been changed. It is hopeful for Mr. Bryan now. With that hope shining before him Mr. Bryan would be foolish to retire, and he will not retire."

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the New York World sends to his paper the following bit of pleasantries: "William Jennings Bryan was busy from sunrise to midnight today, and he wasn't asked to get out of the way, either. At least he says he wasn't. After receiving many callers in his room at the Metropolitan hotel Mr. Bryan went to the capitol and remained there until 4 p. m. Just after the house convened a friend rushed up and announced that, no matter what happened, the next president was in the building. 'How do you know that?' Bryan asked. 'Taft is in the house shaking hands with everybody. You mean that the next president will be named Bill, then,' said Bryan. Another enthusiast rushed up just then and said that Taft was not only in the house but was in the democratic cloak room. 'Go tell him I say to shinny on his own side,' said Bryan."

SPEAKING BEFORE the house committee on the campaign contribution measure Mr. Bryan said: "An election is a public affair and participation in politics is a civic duty. All arguments used in elections should be used publicly, and all means employed to secure the election of or to defeat a candidate should be means which the one using them would not be ashamed to have the world know." Referring to this meeting the Associated Press said: "In addition to the full membership, there were present Perry Belmont and Samuel Gompers and other labor leaders. Mr. Bryan declared that reforms only come when abuses are recognized. 'Not until there is an evil to be remedied,' he said, 'does one think of a remedy. The thing to be remedied in American politics, was the use of money to secure control of the government. When a man resorted to secrecy it must be because he has something to gain that he does not want the world to know or that he distrusts the intelligence or patriotism of the people.' Mr. Bryan insisted that the most important thing to be done was to make the campaign contribution known before the election. He realized that there was an advantage in the finding out after the horse is stolen how the door was unlocked, 'but,' he said, 'I think it much better to find out before the horse is stolen that a theft is contemplated.' The trouble about the publication of expenditures after elections was that the knowledge came too late to be of any advantage to the people in that campaign. It was very easy to change the committee and the personnel of the organizations, he said, and then make scapegoats of those who had been in charge of the elections. Mr. Bryan declared that there could be no objection to anyone making a campaign contribution, 'if that contribution represents his patriotic interest in a public cause.' He said it was the duty of the people to contribute to the expense of disseminating campaign material by way of education. It had been charged, he said, that Chairman Cortelyou had received contributions from six thousand contributors, 'as if,' he said, 'it was a matter to deserve recognition that so many people had contributed.' Even if this were true, he argued that they were a very slim fraction of the several million voters for President Roosevelt. As for the democratic party, Mr. Bryan said that in 1896 it had more contributions than in any previous campaign. Many men would bet \$500 on the result of an election who would not con-

tribute \$5 to a campaign fund. Mr. Bryan, however, voiced his opposition to the principle of allowing only a few men to provide campaign funds. 'It follows almost as a matter of necessity,' he said, 'that these few men will have an influence after the election entirely out of proportion to their numbers or to the influence they ought to have. In other words, without any intention of yielding to the entreaties of these men, without any conscious sacrifice of the public interest to the private claim, those who contribute large sums naturally and almost necessarily have this influence because of the contribution.' Mr. Bryan said he was glad President Roosevelt had taken the matter up. 'He has spoken so plainly on the subject of publicity of campaign contributions,' said Mr. Bryan, 'that I am sure that the fact that I am a democrat will not place suspicion upon my argument, for I think I have the same interest in this matter that the president has expressed.' He declared he was far greater interested in the government and public questions than in personal concern about the success of an individual, 'and,' he added, 'I assume that President Roosevelt and those who, like him, have spoken out in the republican party have the same broad general interest that have democrats who have spoken out.'"

THE DISPATCHES of January 27 from Washington would seem to indicate that President Roosevelt was becoming alarmed lest the numerous decisions adverse to organized labor might lead union men to resent them at the polls, thus injuring the republican party. There would seem, after investigation, to be sufficient grounds for the president's fear. The federal courts have been quite active of late in rendering decisions adverse to organized labor's interests and in issuing injunctions and mandamus. A hasty review brings to mind the following: The decision declaring unconstitutional the employers' liability law; the decision declaring unconstitutional the Erdman act prohibiting a railroad engaged in interstate commerce from discharging an employe because of membership in a labor union; the drastic injunction of Judge Dayton of West Virginia; the Ohio decision holding a trades union a restraint of trade within the meaning of the Sherman law and ordering the dissolution of the glassworkers' union. In addition is the appointment by President Roosevelt of Mr. Stillings to be public printer. Mr. Stillings was secretary of the Typothetae, an organization that engaged in a desperate attempt to disrupt the Typographical union and is now engaged in a legal fight with the Printing Pressmen's union. Also the presidential defense of Bookbinder Miller which resulted in the declaration that the government printing office must be an "open shop." And last, but by no means least, is the presidential selection of Judge Taft as the Roosevelt successor, Judge Taft being the original "injunction judge." A review of recent events is quite enough to make President Roosevelt fear that organized labor may resent what laboring men regard as a studied effort to discredit and defeat it.

THE UNITED STATES supreme court recently held that a corporation has a right to discharge a man because he is a member of a labor union. In response to a question by a correspondent for the Associated Press Mr. Bryan said: "I have not had opportunity to read the decision. The subject is one of vital importance, and I do not understand by what course of reasoning the majority of the court reached the decision announced. A corporation is a creature of law. It has no rights except those given it by law, and it must not be confused with the natural man, for man was created to carry out a divine purpose; the corporation was created to make money. The corporation enjoys many rights and privileges which are denied to the individual and it can not claim the possession of any natural or inalienable rights. The power that creates a corporation can restrict it, restrain it, and control it, and congress has plenary powers in dealing with corporations insofar as they can-