

CURRENT TOPICS

MAYOR-ELECT GAYNOR of New York, addressing the Southern Society of New York at its annual banquet, talked upon municipal government, saying: "The long line of officials and bosses who have made themselves millionaires out of the government of this city, some of whom live abroad and imprudently visit us occasionally now that the statute of limitations has outlawed their villainies is a disgrace to the morale of the community."

DR. COOK, the Arctic explorer, is said to be in a sanitarium in Massachusetts. In the meantime the attacks upon him continue. The New York Times prints sworn affidavits by August W. Loose, a pilot and navigator, and George H. Dunkle, an insurance broker, that Dr. Cook promised them \$4,000 for their aid in preparing the polar records of his journey, which are now in the hands of the University of Copenhagen. The Times also reproduces what purports to be the fac simile of a penciled memorandum, directing the preparation of observations all the way from Swartevaag to the pole. They frankly acknowledged that their motive in making these affidavits is the alleged failure to pay them the full sums said to have been promised. The Times further adds that it is impossible as yet to say that the observations calculated by Captain Loose and which he alleges he supplied to Dr. Cook, are those actually delivered by his secretary, Mr. Lonsdale, to the University of Copenhagen. To establish this point it would be necessary to compare Captain Loose's narrative with the report received by the university.

IN SPITE OF THE New York Times' attack upon Dr. Cook, Copenhagen dispatches say that faith in the doctor is unshaken among the Danes. The following is taken from the same dispatch: "Walter Lonsdale, secretary to Dr. Cook, who brought the explorer's records to Copenhagen, also declared that the accusations published in New York and London against Dr. Cook were totally unfounded. He said that the papers delivered to the University of Copenhagen contained the original observations made by Dr. Cook during the expedition, without alterations. Mr. Lonsdale further stated that the explorer's report was founded on these and dictated by Dr. Cook to him, no other person having anything to do with it. Loose and Dunkle, Mr. Lonsdale added, were guests at the Waldorf-Astoria during the explorer's stay there, but Dr. Cook's acquaintance with them was slight."

HENRY WILLINGTON WACK, who is said to be Dr. Cook's personal lawyer, has, according to New York dispatches, severed relations with his distinguished client and Dr. Cook's enemies are making much of this event. Captain Loose, who is mentioned in the New York Times stories, gave to an Associated Press correspondent this interview: "I went to Dr. Cook thinking I could help him. A short talk convinced me he was ignorant of some of the essentials of navigation. My task enlarged, but that was no question for me to debate so long as I was paid. Now that the payments have ceased and the doctor has disappeared, I speak out. I supplied the figures. They were gratefully received. What use of them was made is bound to appear. A short talk with Dr. Cook convinced me that he knew almost nothing about navigation. He was ignorant of some of the essentials of the science. At first I considered it at least likely that Dr. Cook had got near the pole, say to 89 degrees or within sixty miles of the pole. Even his observations would have given him that accuracy. Later I was forced to change that opinion. A person not especially accurate might have thought himself at the pole when only within sixty miles of it, but as I got deeper into the matter I began to suspect that Dr. Cook was never out of sight of land. Please notice that I have never said that Dr. Cook is about to submit my calculations to the University of Copenhagen as his own observations. Dr. Cook never intimated such to me. I was working for pay then and

was indifferent on that point. Now, I haven't received my pay. I don't express an opinion about when or how Dr. Cook wrote up his record books. Dr. Cook never allowed me to inspect his original record or, indeed, any more of them than has been published in the newspapers." Captain Loose said the writing down of seconds in Dr. Cook's reports of his observations did not show "a skilful attempt to deceive." The limits of error were so great that the recording of seconds would not be of the slightest value in adding accuracy, declared the captain. "Still, of course," he added, "Dr. Cook could have looked at his instruments, seen the seconds and put them down conscientiously, if in ignorance of their lack of importance." As to whether he thought it possible for Dr. Cook to declare now that these calculated observations by Captain Loose were simply for comparison of his own, Captain Loose said: "Dr. Cook will probably say this, but why did he need any such calculations and reckonings backwards as I made for him? Why did he need any one to make calculations for him if he is a navigator and mathematician and if he went to the pole and took careful observations on the way to and from the pole?"

STUDENTS OF government and of current events may be interested in the following article which appeared in a recent number of the New York World: "The gift to 'Fingy' Conners of \$2,000,000 in stock of the United States Independent Telephone company by Democratic State Committeeman Thomas W. Finucane of Rochester is to be investigated by the Davis legislative committee. Conners got the stock 'because he was politically influential and owned two newspapers.' Chairman George Davis, who is a neighbor of Democratic State Chairman Conners in Buffalo, said yesterday the committee would undoubtedly take the matter up soon. Chairman Conners was in the city yesterday—in connection with the stock transaction, it was rumored. 'It is a legitimate matter of inquiry for our committee,' said Chairman Davis yesterday. 'Personally I think Conners' influence was greatly over-estimated when its value was placed at \$2,000,000. The real question is, did Conners divide that \$2,000,000 with other persons of influence?' Thomas W. Finucane, a close personal and political friend of Conners, told about the gift at the recent trial of a suit against the company. Finucane said he had joined in a syndicate with \$1,000,000 to buy a franchise for an independent telephone company to enter the New York field. They purchased for \$250,000 the franchise of the Mercantile Electric company, which operated a private burglar alarm system in the Equitable building under a franchise obtained from the old board of electrical control in 1894. This franchise, with the small equipment of the burglar alarm company, was sold to the New York Independent Telephone company for \$41,000,000; that company selling it in turn to the United States Independent company. At that time Conners was in New York negotiating for the franchise of an independent telephone company. Finucane said Conners subscribed \$200,000 to this syndicate, but never paid in any of the amount. Later he says he gave Conners \$2,000,000 of the stock because of his influence and his newspapers."

FOUR PATIENTS, three of them children, were operated on recently in New York City with all sense of pain abolished by the method of stovaine and strychnine offered to the scientific world by Dr. Jonnesco of Roumania. A New York World report of the operation says: "The remarkable Roumanian, Prof. Thomas Jonnesco of Bucharest, gave his first demonstration in this country yesterday morning at the Hospital for the Ruptured and Crippled, Forty-second street and Lexington avenue. He anaesthetized four patients, three of them children and the fourth a woman of thirty-five years, with stovaine, while half a hundred keen, critical American doctors, six of them women, looked on from the amphitheatre, following every move. Dr. William Mayo, one of the noted

Mayo brothers of Minnesota, ranked by some as the foremost surgeons of America, was the most notable of those who watched the demonstration. He had come half way across the country to witness it, and when it was at an end he congratulated the great foreigner warmly, following up his congratulations with an invitation to the professor to demonstrate at Rochester, Minn., where the Mayos have their hospital. To the newspaper men who asked him for an opinion, Dr. Mayo declined to talk, excusing himself on the ground that he didn't know anything about the anaesthetic, but Prof. Jonnesco said, through his secretary: 'I feel that I could have had no higher honor than this which Dr. Mayo has paid me by his presence. I feel it very deeply.' Prof. Jonnesco did not operate. He simply applied the anaesthetic. The operating surgeons were the Gibney brothers, Drs. Virgil and Homer, and Dr. William Coley, hernia expert. The behavior of the patients was most remarkable. The youngest of the four was a boy, four and a half years of age, suffering from infantile paralysis. He whimpered just a little as the needle punctured his spine, and for a moment when the sharp lance touched his heel, but the rest of the time he laughed and when he was asked, after it was over, how he felt, he replied in a voice that carried to every corner of the room, 'I feel all right, I feel fine.' The third boy was deeply worried for fear that the doctors were 'going to do something' to him. Even while he worried over something he believed impending, Dr. Coley finished the operation for hernia. The youngster lay on the table as calmly as if he were in his own bed, looking at the physician with big, unwinking eyes, feeling nothing though there was an incision several inches long in the region of his abdomen. Prof. Jonnesco said that not one of the patients had felt any pain, and that was their own testimony. Some sceptics present declared that it remained to be seen whether stovaine had any effect on the spinal cord, which would take several months to determine. Prof. Jonnesco was asked about these possible after effects and he said there would be none and had never been."

SPINAL ANAESTHESIA is no new thing and Prof. Jonnesco does not say it is. Dr. J. Leonard Corning, an American surgeon, is said to have been the first to suggest it and Drs. Bier of Berlin, Tuffler of Paris, Morton of San Francisco, Matas of New Orleans, George Fowler and William S. Bainbridge of New York City have all used it. The World's report adds: "But Dr. Jonnesco uses stovaine, combined with strychnine, to stimulate the heart action and that is a new solution. As he explains his method there are 'two essential points of novelty: the puncture is made at a level of the spinal column appropriate to the region to be operated upon; an anaesthetic solution is used, which, owing to the addition of strychnine, is tolerated by the higher nervous centers.' Prof. Jonnesco prefers stovaine to tropa-cocaine or novocain, though he admits that the latter are equally efficacious and equally harmless. It was a strange scene, the operating room, with its white interior, the white robed nurses and surgeons and the semi-circle of tense watchers on the raised seats. Grouped about the patients were half a dozen of the city's most prominent surgeons. Besides the Gibney brothers and Dr. Coley there were Dr. John Walker, who was associated with the late Dr. Bull, and Dr. Clarence McWilliams. Prof. Jonnesco and his secretary conversed together while the patients were being prepared. The professor is a man of middle age, with a deeply lined forehead, thin hair turning to gray over the temples and a keen eye. He prepared his solution in the operating room. The necessary quantity of stovaine, a colorless liquid, was first introduced into a glass tube provided with an india rubber stopper and sterilized in the auto-clave. The strychnine solution was made by dissolving five to ten centigrams of neutral strychnine sulphate in 100 grams of sterilized water in a glass-stoppered bottle previously sterilized. An ordinary Pravaz syringe was used, provided with a needle for lumbar puncture. The little patient of four and a half years was first wheeled out on a