

CURRENT TOPICS

JOHN R. WALSH, a Chicago banker, and proprietor of the defunct Chicago Chronicle, was declared by a jury in the federal court to be guilty on fifty-four counts of the indictment charging him with misapplication of the funds of the Chicago National bank with the intent to defraud the bank.

GENERAL Charles H. Grosvenor, formerly a member of congress from Ohio, has written for the Cincinnati Enquirer and other newspapers concerning the democratic nomination for 1908. In this statement General Grosvenor says: "But the nominee must not be Bryan. I do not undertake in this instance to be a prophet, but applying the processes by which I have heretofore been governed in making prognostications, I don't hesitate to say that Mr. Bryan is impossible."

THE "ANTI-BRYAN" conference which was to be held in New York City January 23 was called off. The New York American intimates that the "conference" was abandoned because of the dearth of responses. The American says: "Immediately after the publication of the story of the calling of the conference Governor Smith, of Georgia; Governor Swanson, of Virginia; ex-Governor Douglas, of Massachusetts; John T. McGraw, of West Virginia, and others repudiated it and wrote to the American that they knew nothing of it."

AT THE Missouri republican editorial meeting held at St. Joseph, January 18, one of the queries proposed by Editor Clark of the Carrollton Republican-Record was "Shall the federal officers control the policy of the party." The St. Joseph correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "Though no action other than the discussion elicited was taken, it was so treated as to guarantee its being the precursor of further comment from the newspapers represented in the association. Mr. Clark declared he had a personal experience which prompted his question, in that though his county had instructed for him as a district delegate to the national convention a federal office-holder had come all the way from St. Louis to Carrollton to tell the republicans there that he must be defeated in the district. Mr. Clark thought this was an impertinence, and said so. When the query was read a chorus of 'nays' came from the editors, and it was readily apparent that it had 'started something.' Ben Deering of the Clayton Watchman was quickly on his feet. He said: 'I had in mind a query concerning the proper use of this annual meeting of republican editors, but this question of Mr. Clark's opens a subject which some of us have desired to talk about. Is it not the business of this association to discuss what policy the republican editors shall pursue in the campaign, rather than what shall be the subscription price of our papers, or the effect of new postal rules as to second-class matter? To the query of Mr. Clark let us say 'no' in a most emphatic manner.'"

THE ROOSEVELT administration is given a warning by the Indianapolis News (rep.) in this way: "In 1882 Charles J. Folger was secretary of the treasury in the cabinet of President Arthur. He was a man of much ability, and of the highest character. He was nominated in that year as the republican candidate for governor of New York, over Alonzo B. Cornell, the incumbent. No one denied that Judge Folger was in every way qualified for the office. But he was beaten by Grover Cleveland by a plurality of almost 200,000. The republicans felt that they had been controlled in their action by the state machine, and that, to quote a chronicler, 'the influence of the national administration had been used to crush a faithful governor because he had offended ex-Senator Conkling and the corporations which he represented.' Dissatisfaction and disaffection were widespread among the republicans, who objected to taking orders and candidates from Washington. The

differences between the factions were irreconcilable. And the result was that Grover Cleveland had a plurality of 192,854, which was composed largely of republican votes. Now the interference of President Arthur in New York was not nearly so direct and vigorous as is that of President Roosevelt. What the republicans principally objected to was not so much anything that the president had done, as the mere nomination of a member of his cabinet. This of itself was thought to savor of dictation. But a fight was precipitated, the chief effect of which was to launch on the public career a man who has given the republican party more trouble than all the rest of its adversaries put together. There thus seem to be limits beyond which it is neither wise nor safe to go. We wonder whether Theodore Roosevelt has forgotten the Folger slaughter, and its cause. We wonder whether he really thinks he is strengthening the party in New York by interfering in county politics, and by opposing New York's leading citizen and able governor."

MR. BRYAN visited Frankfort January 21 and addressed the democratic members of the Kentucky legislature urging them to cast their votes for Mr. Beckham for United States senator. Mr. Bryan visited Nashville, Tenn., January 22, accompanied by Judson Harmon of Ohio. A monster meeting held in the city auditorium was addressed by both gentlemen. In his speech Mr. Harmon said: "It is folly to rail at the trusts and pursue them with fines and injunctions while we carefully cherish the law which breeds and feeds them. The way to stop a growth is to go at the root of it. And what relief would the people get if the trusts were all dissolved, without revising the tariff? The men and concerns which compose them would go right on drawing separately the substance of the people by means of these excessive tariff charges. It would be only a change of form with the same result. I have seen a careful estimate showing that every family in the United States contributes an average of \$100 per year to the gains of the beneficiaries of the Dingley tariff, in increased cost of necessities alone. This explains why those who live on wages and salaries find themselves no better off, notwithstanding repeated increases in their pay. Surely it is our duty, as well as wise policy, to raise our voices against these impositions on the people and give our pledge of relief. They say the tariff must be revised by its friends. We say it must be revised by the friends of the people. Otherwise it will never be done at all or the revision will prove a sham." On January 23 Messrs. Bryan and Harmon visited Birmingham, Ala. There they addressed a monster meeting and also participated in a banquet given by the Birmingham board of trade. Mr. Bryan left Birmingham for Washington City where he spent several days.

THE CHICAGO Inter-Ocean (rep.) prints this editorial: "Dispatches from the east represent republicans thereabouts as 'jubilant' over the likelihood that Mr. Bryan will be the democratic candidate for president this year. Their assumption is that this will make republican victory easy. Republicans who indulge in such pleasing dreams are not only premature in their joy. They are almost ignorant of republican conditions in the west. Of course, the historic democracy is disorganized, and Mr. Bryan stands for this disorganization. But, let us not forget that Mr. Bryan stands also for a reorganized democracy for which republicans in high place have been preparing the way since 1900. When Mr. Bryan stepped aside four years ago and loyally supported the 'conservatives' in their futile effort to show what they could do, he made his own 'calling,' if not his 'election,' sure in 1908. The democracy is reorganizing behind Mr. Bryan. It is not yet organized, but the materials are all there, and Mr. Bryan points the only way which democrats can see to victory. What can be done with a demoralized democracy was shown by the Hearst campaign in New York. And since then much has happened to hurt the republicans and help the democrats. The Inter-Ocean knows whereof it

speaks, for it sits in daily communion with its readers all over the middle west, where presidents are really made. About fifteen per cent of the voters whom the republican party counted in 1904 have been Bryanized. The incessant agitation from Washington against property and rights in property has transformed these voters into semi-socialists. They are headed for Bryanism just as they were headed for it in 1896. These voters must be educated and brought back or replaced. And the task of education will be much more difficult than in 1896, for reasons that are too obvious and numerous to be even mentioned here. These are the cold facts of the situation. They deny to the republican party the pleasing hope of a walk-over. They demand close organization, rigid discipline and plenty of hard work—and then more hard work. Those republicans who think otherwise are hallooing before they get out of the woods."

A BILL HAS been introduced in the senate by Mr. McCreary of Kentucky and in the house by Mr. Bartholdt of Missouri making provision for ex-presidents. Referring to this measure the Washington Herald says: "The purpose is that former presidents shall be ex-officio representatives, for life, of the United States at the pan-American and other international conferences in which the United States may participate. It requests an appropriation of \$150,000, and the former presidents and other members of the commission shall be paid an annual salary of \$10,000, and be allowed to appoint secretaries at a salary of \$3,000, with all traveling and actual expenses paid by the government for the members of the commission and the secretaries. Under the provisions of the bill, the president, by and with the consent of the senate, shall appoint forthwith four other persons as members of the coming conferences, two for four years and two for eight years. It shall be the duty of the former presidents and other representatives to 'investigate and, from time to time, report upon the several propositions looking to the substitution of judicial decisions for force in international relations, with a view to enabling the United States government to co-operate intelligently in all international efforts to secure to the people the benefits of more enduring peace. Their reports shall be made to the president and to the congress of the United States, and they shall investigate and report upon all questions referred to them by the president or by either branch of congress. They shall also disseminate information on the question of international arbitration and peace by addresses and publications in order to insure to the people the benefits of their investigations and conclusions. Their meetings shall be held upon their own initiative, upon the call of the ranking former president or other person chosen by them as chairman, at such time and place as they may agree upon."

THOMAS W. LAWSON has published in "Everybody's Magazine" a statement showing why he abandoned what he calls "his fight for the people." His article is in the form of a letter addressed to E. J. Ridgeway, proprietor of the magazine. Extracts from the Lawson letter follow: "You talk of what I owe the people. What do I owe to the gelatine-spined shrimps? What have the saffron-blooded apes done for me or mine that I should halt any decisions to match their lightning-change, ten-above, ten-below zero chameleon-hued loyalty. The people! The very name has so sealed itself into my being, that heeding its every appearance, of late are myriads of fantastically caparisoned marionettes whose bold fronting of mirror-shields and savage circling of candy swords, make me almost die a-laughing. Forgive me, my dear Ridgeway, but the people, particularly the American people, are a joke—a system joke." Lawson tells of the beginning of his fight and declares that the people would give him no help although he was fighting for them. He says that they "simply stood by and grinned." He continues: "Then came the overturn of all my