

# CURRENT TOPICS

THE kiss is playing an important part in Montana politics, according to a Butte dispatch to the St. Louis Republic. In that dispatch it is said: "Because Senator William F. Myers of Red Lodge stole a kiss from a pretty society girl of Carbon county a few days ago, Roosevelt may lose Montana and the republicans are liable to lose control of the state legislature, and therefore fail to elect a republican United States senator. Senator Myers has previously won the name of 'Kissing Bug' Myers. Saturday evening he met on the streets of Red Lodge the young lady, whose identity is shielded, and forcibly kissed her. She cried for help and was released. She ran home, told her brother and since then the entire eastern part of the state has heard about the affair and has been increasing in indignation."

ACCORDING to the same dispatch, the Red Lodge Picket, a republican paper, has bolted the ticket, ascribing its action to the stolen kiss. L. O. Caswell, candidate for county attorney, has withdrawn from the ticket, saying that he will not run on the same ticket with the kiss stealer. The chairman of the republican county central committee also threatens to resign. The Butte dispatch further says: "Ex-Senator T. H. Carter, a candidate for election to the senate again, has been appealed to to pull Myers off, and his continued candidacy is threatening the success of the ticket in Carbon county, as well as in the state. Lee Mantle, chairman of the state committee, has also been asked to use his influence to get Myers to retire into oblivion. Myers is a prominent politician and banker, and is noted as one of the four republican members of the legislature who refused to vote for W. A. Clark."

NEW YORK newspapers are full of advertisements like the following: "Bureau for Legal Marriages, 2143 Seventh avenue, corner One Hundred and twenty-seventh street. Telephone 22721.—Morningside; evenings by appointment." The New York correspondent for the St. Louis Republic says that this is due to the domestic relation law recently passed by the New York legislature which law legalizes the so-called common-law marriages, thus enabling anyone to be married without the necessity of having to go through any ceremony in the presence of witnesses. They have only to declare their intention to become husband and wife.

THERE are at least fifty of these bureaus scattered through different parts of New York and the Republic's correspondent says that at these bureaus couples are married by the wholesale for the small fee of \$5. The Republic's correspondent says: "It is predicted by some that when once the general public grasps the plan whereby they can have the nuptial knot tied legally for so reasonable a sum, without any objection being raised as to religion, disparity in years, or the unwillingness of hard-hearted parents to allow their daughters to be taken away from them, the clergymen and aldermen will be hard pressed to get enough of that portion of their perquisites known as the marriage fee to make it pay."

ALL that a happy pair seeking to be tied by the bonds of matrimony have to do, according to the Republic's correspondent, is to sign their names and a lawyer does the rest. This correspondent explains: "The domestic relation law makes a marriage legal and binding upon the parties concerned when a certificate blank, forms of which can be obtained from the county clerk's office, is signed by them, two witnesses and a notary public. The certificate is then placed on file in the county clerk's office and a duplicate is given to the couple who have been married. The husband and wife are then as responsible for their marriage vows as if they had been through a long and elaborate church ceremony. Harlem, perhaps, is the place where most of the marriage bureaus are situated. There are twelve within a few blocks there, nearly all of them being in real estate offices where there is a notary. The notary always has legal counsel to fall back on should there be any question raised as to the le-

gality of the marriage and the proceedings are all fair and above board."

ONE of these matrimonial bureaus was visited by the Republic's correspondent. The manager, whose name is Charles Forst, was interviewed. In this interview the manager said: "It is the easiest thing in the world to get married, although many couples go about it with a great deal of preparation and hesitation. In the old method it is customary for the bride to get up an elaborate trousseau; the bridegroom, after spending a lot of money on an engagement ring, has to buy a wedding ring, and much time is taken up in sending out invitations. None of these things are necessary when a couple is married under the domestic relation law. We don't care whether they have a wedding ring or what their condition in life may be. Instead of having to spend most of the money they have saved for housekeeping in a needless expenditure for the wedding ceremony, all they have to do is to make an appointment to come here and bring two witnesses and pay \$5, after which they are married in a few moments. There are many men, also, who hesitate giving a clergyman less than \$10 or \$15 at the least, and several give much larger fees. Differences in religion, as, for instance, a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant, make it very hard sometimes for couples to be married by anybody connected with the church. Here religion doesn't count for anything. Very few questions are asked, and the ceremony, which they have to go through, while simple, is just as binding upon the contracting parties as any other. The public, I have found, however, are a little afraid of the new system, especially the women. They want to be sure they are doing it right and that there will not be a chance of any hitch taking place after all has been said and done. It is hard to get them to believe that they can do away safely with the clergyman, the ring and the marriage ceremony read from the Bible. Most persons believe that the marriage ceremony is a spiritual contract and one wherein the church must take a part. In spite of this general belief, however, we do a large business here. At first the people came very slowly, but the public appears to be catching on to the idea now and more are coming every day."

A WOMAN whose skin is a patchwork of pieces of epidermis taken from persons representing every nation on earth, is Miss Emma Gallagher of Evanston, Ind. The Chicago correspondent for the New York American tells the story in this way: "Miss Gallagher inserted an advertisement in the newspapers through which she hopes to obtain enough money through the sale of sewing machines to enable her to buy another square foot of human epidermis for skin grafting purposes. Twenty-three skin grafting operations have been undergone by Miss Gallagher since she was burned from the neck to waist in a gasoline explosion eight years ago. Her left arm is still without skin and has grown to her body. 'Skin is higher priced than oilcloth,' commented Miss Gallagher sagely yesterday, when she was asked to tell about her efforts to buy skin. 'The average cost of human skin is about \$1,000 a square foot. When I once advertised one hundred men volunteered to sell theirs. Many of them faltered when they came to the test. The best live skin should be taken off in strips about nine inches long and one and three-quarter inches wide. Negro skin, the doctors say, will turn white when grafted on a white person. When I was in St. Elizabeth's hospital for two years thirty-three nurses volunteered to give me skin, but I refused to let them do so. The doctors got some from amputations, but that kind is not so good for grafting purposes. All the nations of the earth are represented in the skin that covers my back. You can call me Chinese or Eskimo if you like, and the chances are that you will not be far from right in some measure. I was originally an American, but my skin is cosmopolitan—decidedly so. If people will give me orders for sewing machines I will be able to get together enough money to secure some more victims for the skin sacrifice.'"

THE city poundmaster at Sioux City, Ia., recently witnessed what he calls "one of the saddest occurrences in the history of the pound,"

and a reporter for the Sioux City Journal says that the poundmaster "actually sat down on a cottonwood log and contributed his mite to the waters of the river." The Journal tells the story in this way: "A man with a wiggling dog under his arm and carrying a sack approached the river bank. He had come there to drown the family pet. The dog was put in the sack and thrown far out into the current. Standing in front of the pound was a spaniel. This dog which has witnessed the public assassination of hundreds of canines jumped into the cold water and retrieved the sack containing the struggling little dog. Holding the sack as far as possible out of the water the dog came to the shore. The man who had thrown the dog into the river could not contain himself and opening the sack he pulled the little black fellow out. He was dead. The dog had suffocated while the spaniel was bringing him to shore. With big wistful brown eyes the spaniel watched the dog taken out of the sack, and had to be held when the body was thrown back into the river. The man who had brought the dog to the river was visibly affected. Poundmaster Cruikshank said it was the most pathetic case he has seen, and he has been busily engaged in arresting unlicensed canines for a number of years. Many times he takes pet dogs away from children whose parents are too poor to pay for a tag. He has watched the tearful youngsters bid farewell to the dog doomed to die at the dog jail unless he was given a license to live. Many times Mr. Cruikshank has been so touched by the fondness displayed by children for their dogs, that quite accidentally he has allowed the dog to escape. Of course the dog went home and the dampness in the eyes of the children disappeared as the canine capered gleefully about them. But yesterday when a man threw the family pet into the river Poundmaster Cruikshank was up in arms. He watched the noble spaniel bring the doomed dog out of the river, and then he approached the man. The man broke down. He wished the poor dead dog could be resuscitated. He said that he had told his children, of whom the dog was a pet, that the dog had run away. They were watching patiently for the dog to return."

AFTER lying helpless and almost completely paralyzed for three months and unconscious for forty-five days, Miss Elizabeth M. Bath, a New York society belle died. Concerning this case the New York American says: "For weeks Dr. Kelly and other physicians have been puzzled over Miss Bath's condition, and heroic but vain measures were taken to save her life. On July 7 Miss Bath, who was twenty-seven years of age, and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Bath, was visiting her aunt, Miss B. K. Donahue, of Manhattan. While laughing heartily over a joyful incident she was relating she suddenly fell to the floor in a swoon. She became unconscious, and though four experts were called in, she remained in that state for thirty days. She was finally taken to her Mount Vernon home, and for a time she was conscious, but again lapsed into a comatose state. Several times it was thought she was dead. Dr. Kelly, who attended her, said Miss Bath was suffering from cerebral hemorrhage, brought on by her sudden laughter, and that a blood clot had formed on the brain, paralyzing the nerve centers. When she finally became conscious almost her entire body was paralyzed and she was helpless. A short time before she died she told her relatives that she suffered no pain. She showed remarkable vitality, but the physicians truly prophesied that the blood clot would finally kill her. For days she was fed through a tube."

FROM Sir Archibald Geikie's Reminiscences the following good story is obtained: "A country doctor who was attending a laird had instructed the butler of the house in the art of taking and recording his master temperature with a thermometer. On repairing to the house one morning he was met by the butler, to whom he said: 'Well, John, I hope the laird's temperature is not any higher today.' The man looked puzzled for a moment, and then replied: 'Well, I was just wonderin' that myself. Ye see, he died at twal o'clock.'"