

CURRENT TOPICS

MRS. AUGUSTA Evans Wilson, the author of "St. Elmo" and other novels, died recently in Alabama. A writer in the New York Globe says: "Mrs. Evans' famous novel, although still steadily called for from librarians, seems so much of another time, and its author had kept herself so screened in obscurity during her later years, that her existence was almost forgotten. Yet in 1866, when 'St. Elmo' came from the press, not a few declared that the great American novelist had at last arrived. It was not a period when the list of 'best sellers' was regularly posted, yet it held the sales record until 'David Harum' came along. The civil war softened sentiments and great was the sentimental appeal of Augusta Evans. Towns, hotels, steamboats were named in honor of her work. With impatient eagerness other things from the same pen were awaited, and for 'Vashti,' when it was still in manuscript, the then high price of \$15,000 was paid. But taste changes with the years, and for nearly a generation the woman who was mentioned by every loyal southerner when a northerner spoke of Harriet Beecher Stowe had lived in her Alabama home practically forgotten. We can smile in a superior way at 'St. Elmo,' but in spite of the luridness of its style and the extravagance of its plot, a sigh can hardly be kept back when we think of the pleasure from which sophistication debars."

THE CHICAGO Journal declares that it has discovered the "lost John Orth," otherwise Archduke Johann Salvator of Austria, prince of the house of Hapsburg, who disappeared thirteen years ago after marrying Ludmilla Stubel, an opera singer. Briefly sketched, the Journal story says: "John Orth was discovered at Painesville, Ohio, working as a machinist at \$15 per week. Previously he had followed this occupation at Grand Rapids, Mich., and Cleveland, Ohio. His reason for making his identity known at this time, the Journal states, was due to his advancing age and his desire that he might be buried in Austria. Johann Salvator, as the alleged archduke has always been known since he left the court at Vienna, was married in London and he and his wife afterward sailed for South America in 'Santa Marguerita,' a schooner which he had chartered. It has always been believed that the archduke lost his life when the schooner sank off the coast of Chili. According to the story of the Painesville machinist, he and his beautiful wife were not aboard the ship. They went ashore at Cusavana, a small port on the Rio de la Plata. It was planned that they should meet the ship at Valparaiso, but the craft sank en route. The romantic couple drifted all over the world, finally taking up a plantation on the island of Martinique. In the Mount Pelee catastrophe his wife and their two children were killed. Salvador, according to the Journal story, was rescued and came to the United States."

ORVILLE AND Wilbur Wright accompanied by their sister Kate have returned to the United States. In Europe they won notable triumphs in the art of sailing through the air. Referring to these now famous men a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald says: "The stay of the brothers in this country will be short, not longer than ninety days. They will complete at Fort Myer the government aeroplane trials begun last summer, and it is taken for granted that they will receive the \$25,000 offered by the government for successful demonstration of a flying machine. Then they will return to Europe to give exhibitions of flying in London, Berlin and other cities, and to profit out of their inventions by selling the right to use them in different countries. Several tempting offers to remain in the United States have been made to them in vain. It is part of the history of humanity's limitations of judgment and knowledge that inventors and originators of ideas have hardly ever found encouragement at home. That 'a prophet is not without honor save in his own country' is as true today as it was two thousand years ago. Nevertheless, such men are largely

made by their environment and progress has been made to the extent that today recognition comes more quickly than in the past. Dayton gave no encouragement to the Wrights in their early struggles, but will honor them two years after Wilbur Wright sailed for Europe, an obscure and still struggling inventor. And it is to the credit of the nation that a New York banker, Charles R. Flint, had faith enough in the Wright aeroplane experiments to finance the European operations in which their success has been demonstrated."

THE STORY of the Wrights in their early days is a common one. The Record-Herald writer says: "Children of a poor minister of the denomination known as the United Brethren in Christ, who had a large family, they went to work as boys. Orville was born in Dayton in 1871; Wilbur near Millville, Ind., in 1867. The first employment of both was in a cracker factory owned by their uncle near Dune Park, Ind. Then they opened a small bicycle repair shop in Dayton, and there began to study the problem of flight. From the experiments of Octave Chanute they learned much, and their first experiments were with gliders, from which they advanced to the planning of propelled, heavier than air machines. Always they worked together, and today neither claims more credit than the other for what they have accomplished. The first test of the brothers' aeroplane flying machine was made at Kitty Hawk, N. C., in 1903. In 1905 they made a successful long-distance flight near Dayton. They have recorded in magazine articles the fact that they had to develop a science of aeronautics by long and patient experiment, finding practically all the text books on the subject faulty. Their success abroad has been great financially as well as mechanically. It is estimated that in France and Italy alone they have collected more than \$500,000 for the rights to their machines. Outside of these sums they have won prizes estimated at \$250,000, and they apparently are destined to become millionaires."

SECRETARY OF the Interior Ballinger has reversed President Roosevelt's order withdrawing public land from the market and President Taft has approved his secretary's act. Washington dispatches say that Mr. Taft reverses the Roosevelt policy because he thinks it was illegal. Secretary Ballinger acted because he thought the Roosevelt policy was unwise. The Minneapolis Journal says: "Gifford Pinchot, chief of the forestry bureau, has had several conferences with the president about the Ballinger restorations. Mr. Pinchot is said to entertain the liveliest fear that before the geological survey can finish its work, the trust will have got hold of all the best sites on the restored land. The president, however, feels certain that Mr. Pinchot is unduly alarmed. As for himself, he feels that the geological survey engineers will be able to locate these sites and that the government, this being done, will have ample time to set them apart for public use. In short, the president is in accord with what Secretary Ballinger has done, although for a different reason. Mr. Ballinger is understood to be strongly opposed to the Roosevelt conservation policy; Mr. Taft favors that policy. Mr. Ballinger, according to the popular impression here, would restore the lands to entry because he believes that the policy behind the withdrawals of them is wrong; Mr. Taft would restore the lands to entry because he believes as a good lawyer that they have been withdrawn without warrant of law."

THE NEW YORK Evening Post says: "Senator Dolliver is most usefully applying a little western bluntness and honesty to the tariff debate. His exposure yesterday of the way in which the cotton and wool schedules have been dictated by the very men who hope to make money out of them, and of the tricks and devices and robberies with which they are stuffed, was most effective. And the good natured ridicule which he poured upon Senator Aldrich

was refreshing. The nettled Rhode Island senator retorted, of course, that Senator Dolliver was only a democrat in disguise, had private grievances to avenge, and had got his information from wicked importers; but that is only the usual abuse visited upon a republican who dares to tell the truth about the tariff. What the country wants to know is not what Mr. Dolliver's motives may be but whether the facts are as he states them. Is it true, as he says, that the manufacturers who disgusted the ways and means committee with their hoggish demands went to Aldrich and got permission from him to write their own clauses in the tariff? Is it the fact that the effect of the Aldrich bill would be to condemn the masses of the people to pay more for poorer clothing? If tariff rapacity is proposing to palm off shoddy and cotton as all wool, and force American workmen to run added risks of getting tuberculosis and dying before their time, it is well that the nation should know it. For Aldrich to insinuate personal grudges and party disloyalty is of absolutely no use to either him or his cause or his greedy clients. What has to be done is squarely to meet Senator Dolliver's charges. In frankly making them public, he has struck a blow for political decency."

A TOUCH OF humor was introduced into the senate proceedings when Senator Gallinger laid before the senate a petition from his constituents in New Hampshire, praying that a reduction of ten cents a bushel be made in the duty on wheat. The Associated Press says: "At the time the petition was read, Mr. Gallinger glanced toward the senators from the wheat growing states, many of whom have figured prominently in the movement for lower duties on the manufactured products of New England. Senators Nelson, Burkett and McCumber and others exchanged significant smiles with the senator from New Hampshire, but no comment was made. Senator Culberson took the litigation against the tobacco corporation instituted by the department of justice. He said that four circuit judges of the United States had expressed the opinion that this 'trust' was a monopoly and existed in violation of the laws of the United States. 'I do not know what may be the purpose of the present attorney general in respect to this suit,' said Mr. Culberson, 'but he has made a speech recently in New York, in which great doubt is thrown upon the course he proposes to take with reference to the enforcement of this anti-trust law. I want to call attention to the fact that the attorney general of the United States in a case brought by his department which is now pending before the supreme court of the United States criticises the opinion of the court below in favor of the government and against a monopoly and suggests, if I know the meaning of the English language, that if that opinion of the lower court is a proper construction of the law, the administration proposes to amend the law on that subject.' Mr. Culberson then asked to have the speech that Attorney General Wickersham delivered in New York, April 30, printed in the Congressional Record, and the request was granted."

AT THE ANNUAL convention of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes' International Association and the Bartenders International League of America in session at Minneapolis, Jerry Sullivan, general secretary and treasurer of the association, told how local branches had been swept away and the men thrown out of their work. Mr. Sullivan addressed the convention and the following report of his remarks is taken from the Minneapolis Journal: "We are free to admit that our opponents have caused us some annoyance; that we surrendered doing business with former locals with mighty poor grace, and gave vent to fervid hope that the apex of the wave that was sweeping over the land had passed and that tranquil conditions would be with us long ere this. Instead of realizing our wishes, we are still confronted with the increased momentum of the storm; a storm that has been vigorous and unceasing, destroying with what seemed little effort, locals whose