

CURRENT TOPICS

WILLIAM R. HEARST has brought suit against the Associated Press and a number of newspapers, among these, the Louisville Courier-Journal, on the charge of libel in connection with the publication of the story of Mayor Gaynor's recent attack upon Mr. Hearst at a New York banquet. Mr. Hearst announces he will make vigorous prosecution of all these publications. Replying in the Courier-Journal, Henry Watterson says: "It is given out that Mr. Hearst will personally come to Kentucky to direct and conduct the suits against us. We sincerely hope that this will prove to be true. In that event, we shall try to make his sojourn interesting. If he will agree to take the stand and answer under oath certain interrogatives which the attorney of the Courier-Journal is prepared to ask him, not only will this interest be augmented, but, in advance, the Courier-Journal company will agree to pay him double the amount of whatever judgment he may obtain."

AN ECHO of the income tax fight in the New York legislature was heard when it was openly charged on the floor of the house, that Mitchell E. Friend had admitted that he voted against the federal income tax amendment in order to save his seat in the house which had been contested by his republican opponent. Friend held his seat by a vote of 107 to 24 and it was charged that the up-state republicans were forced to vote for Friend because of this agreement. Assemblyman Murray charged that Friend had confessed to Minority Leader Frisbie that he had changed his vote on the income tax proposition in order to secure a favorable report in his contest case. Murray called upon Friend to deny this charge, but Friend refused to speak. It is proposed that Friend be proceeded against under the constitutional provisions prohibiting such agreements as Friend was charged with having made.

NOW THE newspaper correspondents say that worry over politics was the cause of King Edward's death. In support of this claim they cite the statement which the king's physicians published over their signature in a London newspaper. This statement follows: "His majesty had for some years suffered from emphysema, with attendant bronchial catarrh, signs of which were permanently present at the base of the lungs. On several occasions digestive disturbances had caused his medical attendants to realize that his majesty no longer had the reserve constitutional power which had stood him in such splendid stead after his serious operation in 1902, and that any intercurrent catarrhal or bronchitic attack of a serious kind would at once call upon both heart and lungs for their fullest effort. It must here be said that those around him knew how earnestly concerned he was at the present strained position of political affairs and this fact should not be lost sight of in an all round consideration of the king's health."

BY A VOTE of 200 to 126 the house of representatives passed the railroad bill after Mr. Taft's framework of it had been materially changed. Before the bill was passed Representative Adamson of Georgia, senior democratic member of the committee on interstate and foreign commerce, moved to recommit the bill with instructions to strike from it the first six paragraphs, which provide for the establishment of the court of commerce. This is President Taft's pet idea. The motion was defeated, 157 to 176. The third roll call was forced on the passage of the bill. On this vote the insurgents dropped back under the party standard. The following democrats voted for the passage of the bill: Representatives Havens of New York, Hughes of New Jersey, Pou, Webb, Kitchin and Page of North Carolina, Garner, Gillespie, Russell and Smith of Texas, Jamieson of Iowa, Saunders of Virginia, and Bartlett of Nevada. The Washington correspondent for the New York World says: "The bill as passed by the house today has had stricken from it the two sections to which the chief objection of the democrats

and insurgents were registered—namely, the paragraph providing for the legalizing of traffic agreements—'pooling'—and the paragraph legalizing mergers. Of the new matter inserted the 'long and short haul' clause is considered by the insurgents as their greatest victory of the present session of congress."

REPRESENTATIVE Adamson of Georgia who led the democratic fight against the railroad bill, said that the worst feature of the railroad bill was the stock and bond provision. "Fortunately, however," he added, "that could not be enforced even if the senate should leave it in. The courts will knock it out. I fought that part of the measure because of its unconstitutionality but I am not at all alarmed at it for the very reason that the courts would immediately pronounce it a violation of the constitution. The democratic minority accomplished all they expected. We have got rid of the pooling and merger clauses which are the next two features to the worst of them all. We have eliminated the proposed control by the attorney general of all litigation and restored that control to the interstate commerce commission. I would have been glad to get rid of the commerce court but that is really the least of the evils and one largely offset by other advantages that we gained. The president says he will not stand for our long and short haul and physical valuation provisions but he can not get them out. What is he going to do about it?"

AN IRISHMAN, P. E. Smith by name, writes to the New York World to pay this tribute to the late King Edward: "The Irish throughout the world would normally be inclined to hear of the death of a British monarch, as of the destruction of the whole British nation, without a ripple of emotion. Toward Edward VII. they had, however, a kindlier feeling than toward any of his predecessors. The late king was a strong home ruler. He greatly liked the Irish and tried hard to gain their affection. He was much distressed by his reception in Ireland—the people polite, but silent and icily indifferent. He was so well disposed toward the religion of the Irish that he is supposed to have been secretly a Catholic. But were he none of these things he would still have remained a high-minded, gallant and lovable gentleman. Requiescat in pace."

THE QUESTION of a new American cardinal has agitated Catholic circles recently and political circles have not been entirely undisturbed. It seems, however, that many people are doomed to disappointment on this line. A Rome cablegram, carried by the Associated Press, says: "It is announced that the pope has struck off from the list of candidates for the cardinalate, all Americans, including the archbishops of New York, St. Paul, Chicago and New Orleans. The chancellor of the vatican confirms this without volunteering an explanation. The question of a new American cardinal has been prominently discussed, but no definite decision has ever been reached. Those most prominently named as candidates have been Archbishop Farley of New York, Archbishop James Edward Quigley, Chicago; Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, and Archbishop James H. Blenk, New Orleans. The Rome Tribuna has on various occasions referred to the probability of the creation of a new American cardinal and has named Archbishops Ireland and Farley as the most probable candidates."

A THRILLING flight in a balloon and a narrow escape from death were had recently by A. H. Forbes of Bridgeport, Conn. and J. C. Yates of New York. Mr. Forbes is vice president of the Aero club of America and Mr. Yates is a New York business man. This was Yates' first trip through the air and will probably be his last. The men lost control of their balloon and it came to earth near the town of Center, Ky. Both men were badly bruised and were removed to a farm house where their injuries were cared for. Speaking to a correspondent

for the Associated Press Mr. Forbes says: "We left Quincy, Illinois, at 6:55 o'clock Monday evening. We were hoping to strike favorable air currents from the west that might give us a chance at the long distance record. We were carried in a s.m.-circle, passing over parts of Illinois, Missouri and Kentucky. Tuesday we encountered intense cold and a severe snow storm at an altitude of 16,000 feet. Tuesday afternoon at an altitude of 16,000 feet we ran into another snow storm. Shortly afterwards we shot up to 20,600 feet. From that time on the cold was so intense that we became benumbed and half stupefied and gradually lost power to control the balloon. I can not tell what the altitude was just before we made our final drop but efforts to let out gas by the valve had not succeeded in bringing us to the ground as fast as desired. Finally I decided to use the rip cord before we lost consciousness entirely. In some manner as yet undiscovered, the cord did its work entirely too well and ripped the bag from top to almost the bottom. The descent was terrific and I judge that for the last 100 feet there was very little gas left in the balloon, as it fell like a stone."

THE IDENTITY of the actual purchasers of the Philippine friar lands and much other information bearing on the sale of land in the island of Mindanao are asked of the war department in three resolutions which the house passed recently. An Associated Press dispatch says: "The resolutions were introduced by Representative Martin of Colorado in an effort to develop whether there is or was any connection between the American Sugar Refining company and Henry W. Taft, a brother of the president, and the sale of the lands or the arrangement for their sale. They were ordered favorably reported with some changes by the insular affairs committee and their passage followed a spirited colloquy between Chairman Olmstead of the committee and Mr. Martin. A fourth resolution by Mr. Martin bearing on the same general question was tabled by the house on the recommendation of the committee as imposing a doubtful duty on the department. The resolutions direct the secretary of war to ascertain by cable 'whether the Mindoro Development company has been authorized to do business in the Philippines.' Mr. Martin insisted that the chief of the bureau of insular affairs had testified before the insular committee the real purchasers of the land were Horace Havemeyer and a man named Sempff, who was formerly vice president of the American Sugar Refining company, and another gentleman associated with the Havemeyers in the sugar business.' Mr. Gersdorff, the attorney, brought into the transaction by the firm of Strong and Cadwallader—Henry W. Taft's firm—according to Mr. Martin, testified before the committee that he was the attorney who carried the transaction through and 'that Horace Havemeyer and Welch and Sempff furnished the money.'"

CRIMINAL lawyers particularly are greatly interested in a decision made recently by the United States supreme court in which decision it is held that punishment must be proportionate to offense. Referring to this decision, the Washington correspondent for the Associated Press says: "The agitation among the legal profession arises from the decision of the court last Monday for the first time in its history in setting at liberty a person convicted of an offense because there has been inflicted upon him 'a cruel and unusual punishment.' It was in the case of Paul Weems, an official in the lighthouse service in the Philippines. His case came under the bill of rights of the island. The court announced that it must give the same interpretation to that bill of rights as given to the eighth amendment to the constitution. Thereupon it proceeded to construe this amendment, prohibiting 'a cruel and unusual punishment.' It was admitted that the constitution-makers had used this phrase only to prohibit the resort to inhuman methods for causing bodily torture. It had been used to prevent a return to the Roman custom of sewing a parricide into a leather bag