

# CURRENT TOPICS

**P**RESIDENT TAFT had an amusing experience at a dinner he attended recently in New York. An Associated Press dispatch tells the story in this way: President Taft who entered at a late hour was escorted into the banquet room by a committee of members of the Ohio society and the life and drum corps of the Seventh regiment, national guard of New York. He was given an ovation, the cheering lasting several minutes. When President Taft entered the banquet hall where the dinner to Former President Andrew D. White of Cornell was to be held the first person he saw was Henry Phipps, the Pittsburgh steel man. The president stretched out his hand and said: "How do you do, Mr. Phipps?" Mr. Phipps looked blankly at the president a moment. "Pardon me, I don't seem to recall your face," he said. A wave of laughter from the diners brought a smile to the president's face, which had clouded for a second. "Mr. Phipps," he said, "I think if you take a good look at me you will recall—" Before the president could complete his sentence Mr. Phipps, who had continued gazing intently at him, broke in with: "Why, President Taft, I beg your pardon. I really did not recognize you." The president laughed as he warmly shook Mr. Phipps by the hand and walked to the place reserved for him. Mr. Phipps took the matter good naturedly and laughed with the rest of the diners.

**M**RS. LONGSTREET, widow of the Confederate General Longstreet, wired to Attorney General Carmody of New York, that she would raise \$23,476 from "the ragged and maimed followers of Lee" rather than see General Daniel E. Sickles imprisoned. Attorney General Carmody replied as follows: "Your sympathetic and patriotic expressions do justice to your heart, but they do violence to the facts in this case. General Sickles is being prosecuted by the state of New York for converting to his own use the sum of \$23,476. This money came into his hands as chairman of the state monument commission, to be used, among other purposes, for the erection of monuments to mark the resting places on the field of Gettysburg of the brave soldiers who fell in defense of their country and to provide for a celebration upon the field of Gettysburg in which those living might participate at the state's expense in a fitting manner. General Sickles appropriated this amount to his own use. This he has not attempted to justify or to defend, admitting that he took the state's money for private use without authority of law, an act which under our laws and under the laws of all civilized governments means stealing. He was given his own time to repay this amount, and that time was extended, at his suggestion without any desire to embarrass him and with the full appreciation of the claim which he has upon this nation for the great services he rendered in the rebellion. These services can not be overestimated, but even the fame of the soldier must not be used as a cloak or protection for the commission of crime, and it is nothing less than misdirected sympathy to undertake so to confuse the question involved as to make an ordinary prosecution for a crime seem like persecution and to elevate as a martyr a person who confesses his dereliction. New York state appreciates her heroes, and feels humiliated at the spectacle which this case presents. New York state also respects her laws and seeks to enforce them in a spirit of equality to all. I trust this brief statement of the facts will show you how erroneous have been your views, how misplaced your sympathy and how misdirected your criticism."

**H**EAITLESS LIGHT is the latest thing and the story is told in a Paris cablegram to the Chicago Tribune in this way: M. Dussaud, a French scientist, who has discovered a means for the production of what he terms "cold light," made public some details of his discovery, which, it is thought, may revolutionize electric lighting. Starting on the principle that rest is as essential to matter as to animal organism, he has constructed an electric lamp in which the light is concentrated on a single point by filaments working successively; thence the light

is projected through a lens magnifying a thousandfold. Thus he has succeeded in concentrating a 2,000 candle power light on one point, and in passing thirty-two volts into an eight volt lamp, which with the ordinary light would burst. Experiments with this lamp have established that the new light is absolutely without danger, as no heat is given off and it requires a hundred times less current than the ordinary lamp. It can be worked by a tiny battery, or sufficient motive power can be obtained from a jet of water from an ordinary faucet, or even a squirrel turning a cage. The light, it is said, offers great advantages in photography, as its photogenic power is four times that of the magnesium flashlight. It has been tried with great success at the Biarritz lighthouse, and M. Dussaud is working on its application to searchlights for the ministry of war.

**I**T is clear that some things decidedly un-American are going on along the edges of America. The San Francisco Bulletin prints this editorial: John Hays Hammond has announced that he proposes to settle the long pending Yaqui war, single handed and alone. This is appropriate, inasmuch as the gentleman representing the big interests of the United States and Mexico was the cause of starting it. The Yaquis had occupied the beautiful valley named after them for countless centuries. They were there when Cortez came. These people are the highest type of aborigines, physically magnificent, industrious, capable tillers of the soil, with the primitive characteristics of truth telling, virtue and uncivilized honor. Though peace loving, they have always been able to defend their rights. When Diaz was in the height of his power they successfully resisted an attempt to disturb their territorial possessions and extorted from the government a definite treaty, assigning the lands of the Yaqui river to the tribe in perpetuity. This seemed a final settlement; but the prize was too rich. A redistribution was slipped past the Mexican government by which all the valley was turned over to certain interests, Mexican and foreign, while the Yaquis were assigned the mountain tops and coyote ranges. That's how Mr. Hammond came by his paper title to 600,000 acres there. That was ten years ago. A war followed which is still in progress. It has cost thousands of lives, almost ruined the mining industry of Sonora, destroyed its business, and the end is not yet. Now comes along Mr. Hammond and says that if the Yaquis will lay down their arms he will let them come back to their old homes and work for him. That means, under usual conditions of labor in Mexico, to become the slaves of himself and his associates. When high-class gentlemen, rich beyond the dreams of avarice, descend to such a game of heartless, cold-blooded pillage, is it strange that the every-day world is cynical?

**N**OW it is a judge who "attacks the courts." A Troy, N. Y., dispatch to the Philadelphia North American says: Revolution of the courts impends unless the courts purge themselves of outworn methods, and thus quell the justified dissatisfaction of the masses. In a broadside leveled at antiquated laws and the "timidity of judges," Justice Wesley O. Howard, of the appellate division of the supreme court of New York, so declared before the alumni of La Salle institute. The recall of judges and judicial decisions promises no cure, Justice Howard said, but anarchy instead. "All men are supposed to be equal before our laws," he said, "but that seems not to be so. The road to justice should be straight, short and simple. There should be no tollgates on the way, no brigands, no false guideboards. The suitors traveling in automobiles should have no precedence over those on foot. It is not well to scoff at the mutterings of the people; there is much reason for it. "Revolutionary measures are to be avoided. The movement should begin from within; it is well for the great jurists of the land, the judges of last resort, to take heed of the temper of the times, unbend from their conservatism and work out the reform themselves. Let us not deceive ourselves. Something will happen. Unless the judges act, the people will act; if

they do not resort to the recall, they will revise the constitution and create new courts." Many decisions today, Justice Howard added, record the views, "not of the judges who sign them, but of the judges who lived before the renaissance." The rule of precedent, he declared, dominated the rule of right. Expert testimony he characterized as "that hideous farce."

**W**ITH the election of Willard Saulsbury as United States senator from Delaware to succeed a republican, it was assured that the senate will be safely democratic. With Mr. Saulsbury's election the democrats have forty-nine senators, a majority of two. An Associated Press dispatch says: Mr. Saulsbury's election, added to the victory recently secured in Tennessee, assures the democratic party absolute control of the senate after March 4. The vote of Vice President Marshall would have been the deciding factor in any event, but the addition of another democratic vote to the column gives the party leaders what they believe to be a safe margin for tariff and legislative action. Contests still exist in the legislatures of New Hampshire, West Virginia and Illinois, with a total of four senators to be elected about whose political affiliations doubt now exists. A victory in any one of these states so materially would strengthen the democratic party that the senate would be removed completely from the element of uncertainty. The attitude of the progressives and the progressive republicans upon tariff matters is yet unknown, but the margin of strength promised to the democrats make it unnecessary, it is believed, to count upon any combinations with the progressives. Of the entire membership of ninety-six senators, sixty-three will hold over beyond March 4. Of these thirty-two are republicans and thirty-one democrats. The terms of thirty-two senators expire in March and there is in addition one vacancy in Illinois. Thus far seventeen democratic senators have been elected, and the election of Senator Bacon in Georgia is certain, making eighteen democrats to take the oath of office March 4. The opposition forces, including both the republicans and the progressives, have elected eleven new senators. The senate after March 4 will stand as follows, if the deadlocks are not broken in Illinois, New Hampshire and West Virginia: Democrats, 49; republicans and progressives, 43; vacancies, 4.

**T**HE typewriting machine is of such service to men that the Nashville (Tenn.) Democrat recently devoted an editorial to it. The Democrat said: It required many years of experiment and invention to make it a dependable machine. Inventors were at work over fifty years ago endeavoring to make a typewriter that could answer the purposes for which the machines are now used, but it was not until about 1873 that the device was so improved as to be made practicable. There were many machines constructed for mechanical writing which were in the main similar in principle to those in present use; that is, in the use of keys for manipulating movable type, but the difficulty was in getting the machines to work satisfactorily. In this connection the following description of a typewriter invented and constructed by Samuel W. Francis, reproduced from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper of the date April 24, 1858, will be interesting: "This machine is placed in a neat, portable case about two feet square and ten inches deep, which may be carried about and used on any ordinary table. It is worked by means of keys placed on a keyboard like those of a piano, each key representing a letter of the alphabet and each letter producing its impression at a common center. An endless narrow tape stretches the full length of the bed of the machine, passing over a small roller at either end and uniting underneath. The type is saturated with the ink. \* \* \* The lids being raised from the keys they are played upon as in a piano, each being lettered from A to Z, with the various punctuation marks, etc. \* \* \* As the printing goes on the paper moves steadily to the left, and when the line is within four letters of its end a little bell rings spontaneously to notify the writer