

CURRENT TOPICS

IN THE PRESENCE OF REPEATED DEMANDS that the United States increase their naval forces, it may be imagined that no progress is being made in the effort to increase the strength of the navy. That this is a mistaken notion is pointed out by a writer in Public Opinion in this way: "We are already at work upon twenty-four large ships, of which thirteen are battleships, while France has under construction only nine battleships, Germany ten, and Russia ten. The extent to which we are exceeding these countries in naval construction is better exhibited in a comparison of tonnage of ships under construction: We have 324,351 tons, against France's 277,915, Germany's 159,510, and Russia's 140,558."

AN OLD NEGRO BOOTBLACK IN THE NATIONAL capital who has a stand patronized by senators and congressmen, declared to the Washington correspondent of the Des Moines Register and Leader that he can tell by the feet of any of his customers what state they are from. This correspondent relates the story in this way: The other day a fine looking gentleman, past middle life, got into Rufe's chair. "An Iowa foot, sah," said Rufe, looking at him for acquiescence. The gentleman smiled and took an Indiana paper out of his pocket which he began reading. Rufe looked puzzled for a moment until his customer remarked: "Indiana at present; but I am a Hawkeye, however just moved to Hoosierdom." Rufe Cheney is the old bootblack's name and he calls his achievement the "Science of Foototomy." First he guessed at feet just for fun and his guesses only extended to the identification of a foot from the northwest, south or east. "Den," says Rufe, "I begin with pickin' em by states and I soon foun' it bettah fun dan pickin' the pennies. It was a mos' rema'kable fact, boss, dat de feet of men folks shape up pucisely like de feet of othahs in the same state." Rufe says that it is easy to pick out men from the south from the high instep, light fancy leather tops, and cheap store shoes with narrow soles. The gentlemen from the west, he says, wear custom made wide soles, heavy uppers and differ by states in the manner of styles, such as laces, buttons and congress. The gentlemen from the further west wear cowhide and heavy calf uppers and mostly boots. "Dey all hab flat feet but no co'ns," says Rufe.

AN INTERESTING STORY RELATING TO A suit brought several years ago against a bank cashier in an Iowa town is related by "The Green Bag." The purpose of the suit was to recover a deposit. The bank cashier denied that the deposit had ever been made. It is related that during the trial the defendant's attorney made a very convincing argument for his client, and took pains to tell the jury of his client's high social and religious standing and of the confidence of the people which he enjoyed, and endeavored to impress upon the minds of the jury that the defendant was not the kind of a man to make a mistake in the handling of other people's money. T. H. Milner, a witty as well as a very shrewd lawyer, represented the other side, and in addressing the jury, said: "Gentlemen, I heartily concur in what my brother has said of the defendant; I agree with him in each and every statement that he has made pertaining to Mr. —'s good self; but I would have you consider deeply this one fact—Canada is full of just such men."

THE WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT RECENTLY went under the doctor's care, her illness being due to the enormous burdens placed upon her because of her social duties. A hint as to the tremendous burden resting upon the president's wife is presented by the Washington correspondent of the New York World in a summary showing the strain under which Mrs. Roosevelt has been since the season began. The summary follows: House guests entertained, 200; dinner parties given, 36; average guests at each dinner party, 20; guests at luncheon, 275; guests at breakfast, 50; state dinners, 3; average number of guests at state dinners, 90; attended cabinet dinners, 8; musicals given, 6; average number guests at musicals, 300; total guests at musicals, 1,800; state receptions, 5; guests at New Year's reception welcomed by her, 8,000; guests at four other state receptions, 7,200; afternoon receptions given by Mrs. Roosevelt, 5;

average number guests at each afternoon reception, 1,200; total guests at afternoon receptions, 6,000; guests invited to Blue Room, entertained after state receptions, 1,500; average number invited to Blue Room each reception, 300; dined with Senator Hanna, 1; dined with Senator Lodge, 1; It will occur to a great many people that this is altogether too heavy a burden for any woman to be required to bear. Society at the national capital could well afford to become a bit more conservative in its festivities both from the standpoint of members of that society generally as well as out of consideration for the president's wife. So good a mother as Mrs. Roosevelt is known to be has responsibilities altogether more important than any and all of the social functions that must be sufficient to demand a very large share of her attention.

A QUEER MONUMENT STANDS IN MT. HOPE cemetery at Logansport, Ind. This monument was erected to the memory of William H. Reighter. It is related by a correspondent of the Cincinnati Enquirer that Mr. Reighter was a ditch contractor and prominent in his locality. It was on a rainy day that death came and he was well prepared for the weather. He was wearing a broad-brimmed hat, a mackintosh over his suit of clothes and his trouser legs were in his rubber boots. The members of the family, wishing to remember him as he looked when last he bade them good-by, employed a man about the same size and build as Mr. Reighter to have his photograph taken in the clothes last worn by the deceased, and when he had carried out this idea they replaced the head on the photograph with the head of a likeness of Mr. Reighter. This picture was sent to a sculptor in Italy, with the request that a life sized statue be made from it in Italian marble. The statue is true to life. It cost \$5,000.

IT WOULD SEEM THAT THIS IS INDEED A warlike age. Under date of Washington, February 23, the Associated press sent out the following interesting dispatch: "The war department has sent notices to the governors of each state that it is prepared to supply them upon demand and according to their legal allowances with 'riot cartridges.' This is a new form of ammunition prepared by the experts of the ordnance bureau to enable officers of the law and soldiers to repel rioters with the least possible loss of life to the innocent spectators. The shell is like the regular shell used in army rifles, with the important exception that instead of the long nickel-plated and steel-clad bullet two balls are inserted in the mouth. The design was apparently to secure something of greater range than buckshot, yet not dangerous to persons at a distance. The cartridge is charged with about thirty-four grains of smokeless powder. The balls are made of a mixture of lead and tin in the proportion of sixteen to one, and are slightly coated with paraffine. The diameter of the ball is .38-inch and the weight is forty-two grains. The regular primer for smokeless powder is used. The cartridges have sufficient accuracy for effective use at 200 yards."

THE "MARCH OF BEGGARS" IS A TERM that has been employed to describe the army of unemployed men that have been asking for work or alms in the city of London. The London correspondent of the Philadelphia Press describes this strange spectacle in this way: "Since the first of January every day at dawn the great army of London's unemployed has taken the road and displayed itself along Mile End street and Battersea and in Hyde Park. From the last named rendezvous they have gone forth toward evening to file though the brilliantly lit streets of the city, dragging slowly, gloomily through Trafalgar Square and the Strand. All ages of men walk in the ranks, healthy men and men who still bear the marks of diseases brought from the Transvaal. It has not been a pleasing sight in London, nor one of which she could be proud. That these processions have gradually grown shorter is a matter for congratulation, and it is to be expected that in another month, perhaps much less, all of these men will have found occupations. In the meantime the British capital still has a part of its problem to solve. The home secretary,

Amos Douglass, is the man most concerned in seeing the proper solution reached. On the flanks of the column as it marches walk men collecting alms from the passersby. They carry small market baskets, empty cigar boxes, battered hats anything and everything into which pennies may be dropped. When the line halts from time to time these men gather along the curbs, carrying their petitions to the curious and the charitable alike, who have stopped to see this peculiarly twentieth century procession. How much they gather in for the benefit of themselves and their fellows will probably never be known accurately, but to judge from the clink of the small coins which are given them, the march of the unemployed is not unprofitable."

A MODEST BRICK BUILDING USED AS A stable in Philadelphia rests upon a foundation made of Mexican onyx. The story of how this valuable material came to be used for the foundations of this stable is related by the Philadelphia Press in this way: "The stable itself is a modest two-and-one-half-story brick, of the plainest possible sort. It is practical and not ornamental. It occupies space near the center of the city, and if William Penn just turned his weather eye a little to the left as he looks over Philadelphia from his eminence at the top of the City Hall tower he could look directly upon the roof of this particular stable. The company upon whose property the stable sets and for whose purpose it is employed is one of the largest importers of American onyx in America. Nearly five years ago their attention was called to an importation of onyx that came from Vera Cruz—the main Mexican port for the importation of the stone—and which lay on a steamer's dock in New York harbor. The stone was so hard it turned the edge of every cutting tool they had in their equipment, and they realized that as beautiful as the material was it was not practical for any commercial purpose. The entire consignment was taken to a lot belonging to them in the outskirts and lay for nearly five years. When a new stable was planned one of the officials said: 'Why not use the onyx for its foundations?' No sooner suggested than done. The blocks were of just the right size and there was no questioning their solidity. Now—supporting a structure of common, ordinary Philadelphia red brick the Mexican onyx blocks are fulfilling a useful but an humble mission."

AN OHIO COURT HAS RECENTLY ISSUED an injunction restraining a devout church member from participating in the services with undue enthusiasm. The Columbus (O.) correspondent of the Chicago Chronicle reports that Isaac Tenant has been suppressed by the United Brethren of Mount Gilead for calling out "Amen" too loudly at revival meetings. Isaac was always seated close to the front and in the excess of his piety his ejaculations reverberated through the church. His voice grated on the ears of other members of the flock and they put a stop to it by injunction. The court allowed a restraining order, but later modified it in such a manner that Tenant was given the privilege of attending meetings, but had to worship in silence. Tenant is wealthy and has employed lawyers who will carry the case to the supreme court.

AN INTERESTING REFORM INAUGURATED in the Indian bureau relates to the bestowal of names upon Indian children. An order has been issued that when these Indian children enter schools or go upon the agents' rolls, that they shall whenever it is practicable preserve as given names the Indian names that have been given them, but shall receive as a surname the name of their father. Explaining the necessity for this order, the Washington correspondent of the Chicago Chronicle says: "It is well known that the name bestowed upon the Indian on his entrance into the vestibule of civilization is commonly a matter of foolish caprice on the part of some agent or teacher or other white person. It is a common trick to call young Indians at school after some famous or notorious persons. The struggles of the young aborigine are often added to by the necessity of bearing through life the name of Otto Von Bismarck or George Francis Train or Belva Lockwood or Carrie Nation or