

# CURRENT TOPICS

**A**MONG THE SEVERAL PROBLEMS IN our new possessions the opium question in the Philippines is pressing for solution. William E. Curtis, the Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says that this question is much more perplexing than the regulation of the liquor traffic and that no definite plan has yet been decided upon. According to Mr. Curtis, the members of the Philippine commission have been studying the subject and as a result of their investigations have devised a scheme which will be formally acted upon and probably adopted. This plan contemplates the "farming out" of an opium monopoly to the highest bidder, so that one person of responsibility shall have entire control of the sale of the drug in the archipelago, and will be held responsible under a heavy bond for the enforcement of the regulations. It will be the same method which the English and the Japanese have carried out with great success, but with some modifications. It is not difficult to understand that Mr. Curtis imagines that there is a degree of philanthropy in this "farming out" of an opium monopoly, and yet many people will be a bit anxious as to the result of this experiment.

**T**HE CONCESSION ON THIS PROPOSED opium monopoly, according to the Record-Herald's Washington correspondent, will be granted after a competitive bidding and the person or corporation receiving it will be placed under heavy bond to comply with the laws which the correspondent says "will be made as strict as possible." The concessionaire will not only be the sole importer, but will also be the only agent for the sale of opium. During the Spanish regime the income to the government from the opium monopoly averaged about \$650,000 per year. The Record-Herald correspondent ventures the statement, however, that proper regulation under United States authority "will be so strict as to diminish its sale and the revenues will not be so large." He thinks, however, that perhaps half a million dollars per year will be paid into the treasury by the holder of the opium monopoly in quarterly installments without expense to the government. He says that this will be disbursed by the superintendent of education subject to the approval of the governor general and the Philippine commission.

**U**NDER THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS AS stated by the Record-Herald's correspondent, no opium may be sold to any person except full-blooded adult Chinese who are in the habit of smoking it. Every sale must be recorded in a book, which shall be open to public inspection, and the records shall show the name and address of the purchaser, the date, the quantity and the amount of money paid. Each purchaser will receive a certificate giving the same information, which must be shown to the police if he is found smoking the drug. Any American or native Filipino found smoking will be severely punished and the penalty for selling the drug to any but full-blooded adult Chinamen will be very heavy.

**C**HAMBERLAIN'S PROPOSITION SUGGESTING a material change in the economic policy of the British government has attracted widespread attention. It is evident that there is within the United States division of opinion as to exactly what Mr. Chamberlain means. Henry Watterson, writing in the Louisville Courier-Journal, says that stripped of evasions the doctrine enunciated means an abandonment of free trade policy by Great Britain and adoption in its place of a policy of protection both for the benefit of the British farmer and the farmers of the colonies." Mr. Watterson admits that it is quite true that Mr. Chamberlain disclaims any intention of a reversal of the policy of the empire, but he adds that protection "being a gigantic system of imposture, must always be introduced under false pretenses and its advocates understand this better than its dupes." Mr. Watterson, referring to Mr. Chamberlain, says that "he seeks to beguile the working masses with a promise to tax other people for their benefit, the stock argument of the protectionists in other countries. But the increase of the price of food produced at home will not go into the treasury, and so cannot be paid out on old age pensions. Mr. Chamberlain will

find it necessary to explain this also to the exponents of taxed food."

**I**T IS POINTED OUT BY MR. WATTERSON IN this same interesting review of the Chamberlain policy that of the trade of Great Britain less than one-fourth is with the colonies and that for the sake of this, the remaining three-fourths or four-fifths are to be put in jeopardy. In other words, Mr. Watterson says that Mr. Chamberlain would tax the British workingman for the benefit of the colonies and that he will ask the colonies in return to back him up in pushing the pretension of the empire to rule the world. "This," says Mr. Watterson, "is the program upon which Mr. Chamberlain proposes to go to the country with the suggestion that it be sanctioned, in which event he would be the logical premier to carry it into effect. It is a bold scheme and Mr. Chamberlain has carried through other bold schemes, but he should remember the fate of the pitcher which goes once too often to the well. It may be that his effort to commit Great Britain to protection as the handmaid of aggressive imperialism will not command the assent of the British voters. At all events, the United Kingdom seems to be at the parting of the ways.

**M**R. CHAMBERLAIN'S NEW POLICY HAS naturally attracted attention at Washington and William E. Curtis, the Chicago Record-Herald correspondent, refers to Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion as "an extraordinary proposition." Mr. Curtis thinks that having involved the British government in its present financial difficulties it is only natural for Mr. Chamberlain to suggest means of recuperation and relief. Mr. Curtis explains, however, that Mr. Chamberlain's proposition does not contemplate exactly a protective tariff. He says: "It is what we would call a tariff for revenue only with preferential duties in favor of the British colonies. The British treasury is empty, and free trade will not fill it. British industries are suffering from keen competition with Germany, France and the United States, and free trade encourages instead of restricts the importation of foreign merchandise. The taxes now paid by the British people are such as no other nation would endure, and there is no other source of revenue except to introduce collectors into the custom houses on the American plan. Mr. Chamberlain is perhaps the only man in public life in Great Britain, at least the only man connected with the government, who has nerve enough to offer such a solution of the pending problem and suggest such a reversal of the economic policy of the government, but it is no more sensational than was his desertion of Mr. Gladstone on the Irish question eighteen or twenty years ago, and he is a practical man. His enemies and critics delight in calling him a "shopkeeper," and he has shown himself to be a man of great resources on many occasions when such men were needed. He has no sentiment, he does not care for tradition, and he has never worshiped a fetish. He is willing to adopt any measure in an emergency." Mr. Curtis explains that the changes proposed by Mr. Chamberlain cannot take place in Great Britain for a long time and that it will be at least eighteen months if not two years before the people will have a chance to vote upon it.

**A**N EXTRAORDINARY STORY RELATING TO a derelict which has been floating around the Eastern Sea is related to a representative of the Chicago Record-Herald by a naval officer who has recently returned from China. According to this naval officer: "The Fannie Kerr is a four-masted bark of 2,426 tons, built of steel in 1892 at Liverpool. Commanded by Captain Gibbons she left Newcastle in April, 1902, with a cargo of coal for San Francisco. She rounded the Horn in safety, but her cargo caught fire in the South Pacific, and after trying for more than a month to extinguish the flames the ship became so hot that the captain and crew abandoned her on the 6th of June and took to their boats. They landed at Kauai, an island of the Hawaiian group, made their way to Honolulu and secured passage to San Francisco, where the captain made his report and the crew were discharged. He then returned to his home in Bristol. The name of the vessel was stricken from the list and the underwriters paid the full amount of insurance. On the 10th

of March last the captain of the steamship Heathdene, bound from Yokohama to Formosa, sighted a vessel adrift, from which smoke seemed to arise. Steaming toward her he discovered that she was the long missing Fannie Kerr, which had been gradually drifting westward several thousand miles for nearly nine months, with her cargo still on fire. He sent men aboard with a cable and towed the derelict to the nearest port. At last accounts the probability of extinguishing the smoldering fire in the cargo of coal was quite favorable. The Fannie Kerr is a fine steel vessel, and, so far as can be ascertained by outward appearance, her hull has not been injured."

**T**HE HOLY FAMILY, IS THE TITLE OF A picture that for several years has been hanging in the Bristol Young Men's Christian association. A writer in the London Chronicle says that there has recently come to light an interesting romance in connection with that picture, and describes the same in this way: "The owner lent it for a long time, and once proposed that the association should buy it. He did not wish to drive a hard bargain. The picture was obviously a good one; it was 6 feet by 4½ feet. Would the committee like to buy it for £10? 'If you would,' he said, 'I am so much in sympathy with your excellent work that I am willing to contribute £5 myself toward the purchase money.' But the committee felt that they had more important demands for their £5 notes, and they replied accordingly. By and by the owner died, and the executors began to realize his estate. The picture was looked up and the work was ordered to be packed and sent to London for sale. Judge the satisfaction of the executors when they received an offer of £7,000 for it, and were advised not to sell under £10,000. Experts have identified the picture as from the brush of Pietro de Cortona, the great Italian painter of the early seventeenth century."

**T**HE NAME OF GOD AS IT APPEARS IN DIFFERENT languages is described by a writer in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in this way: Elohim, Hebrew; Gott, Swiss and German; Eilah, Chaldaic; Goed, Flemish; Eleah, Assyrian; Godt, Dutch; Alah, Turkish and Syriac; Alla, Malay; Gotth, Teutonic; Allah, Arabic; Gude, Danish and Swedish; Teut, old Egyptian; Teun, new Egyptian; Gude, Norwegian; Teuti, Armarian; Bogo, Polish; Thios, Greek; Burz, Pollacca; Jubinat, Lapp; Sire, Persian; Maratal, Tartar; Deus, Latin; Diex, Latin low; Diu, Gallic; Dieu, French; Dios, Spanish; Deos, Portugese; Diet, old German; Dious, Provencal; Doue, low Breton; Dio, Italian; Dia, Irish; Deu, Olala tongue; Thios, Cretan; Jumala, Finch; As, Runic; Fetiyo, Zemblain; Istu, Pannonian; Rain, Hindostanee; Brahma, Coromandel; Prussa, Chinese; Goezar, Japanese; Zannah, Madagascar; Puchecammae, Peruvian.

**A**LAW SUIT HAS RECENTLY BEEN COMMENCED in which Melville W. Fuller, chief justice of the United States supreme court, is the leading defendant. This is a proceeding involving an application to obtain a judicial construction of the will of the late Wallace C. Andrews and while it is largely a formality, it is nevertheless interesting. The New York correspondent for the Chicago American explains the proceeding in this way: "Wallace C. Andrews was one of the original Standard Oil men and president of the New York Steam company at the time of his tragic death in April, 1899. The residence of Mr. Andrews, at Fulton avenue and Sixty-seventh street, caught fire, and he and his wife and his sister-in-law, Mrs. St. John, wife of the present plaintiff, were burned to death. Mr. Wallace's will gave his wife a life interest in all his property, gave \$500,000 in bequests to other relatives and then the will provided for the establishment in Willoughby, O., of a home and school for girls where all useful, housewifely and business trades were to be taught. Mr. St. John formed a corporation for the establishment of the home in accordance with the provisions of the will, so that the present directors are Governor Nash of Ohio, Congressman Beidler, Mayor Collister of Willoughby, the county treasurer of Lake county, Ohio, and Mr. St. John himself. The will provided further that if the scheme for the girls' home should in any event prove illegal because of the public