

CURRENT TOPICS

WILLIAM T. STEAD'S OPINIONS ON EUROPEAN politics are always expressed in an interesting way. Mr. Stead is a thorough student and while it is claimed that he is a man of strong prejudices he very often hits the nail on the head. In a London cablegram to the New York World Mr. Stead declares that Mr. Chamberlain's political career is reaching an end. Concerning this interesting English statesman, Mr. Stead says: "He falls as he rose—by his own hand. He has been self-unmade, as he was self-made. After deserting the liberal party over home rule he has now shattered the unionist party by his plunge for protection."

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO SEE THAT MR. Stead has no particular love for Mr. Chamberlain, for he refers to him as "the man who has exercised a baleful ascendancy over the fortunes of the British empire for seven years;" and he speaks about the menacing shadow of a statesman who has been the curse of his country ever since he took a hand in the Jameson-Rhodes plot against the Transvaal republic." Mr. Stead says that Mr. Chamberlain returned from South Africa "sick and weary of the war and more or less disappointed by its results." He says that Mr. Chamberlain "soon discovered that the education act had roused a temper of resistance in the country that would be inevitably fatal to the ministry unless something very sensational could divert public attention from the question." According to Mr. Stead, Mr. Chamberlain "did not like the Irish land bill. He believed it to be unpopular with the British taxpayers and probably ineffective as a means of settling the Irish land question." Mr. Stead intimates that the British ministers generally "were content to await in dull despair the rising of the tide of public indignation which would overwhelm them, but Mr. Chamberlain realized that something must be done to force a new issue upon the public." And then Mr. Chamberlain, who, in the opinion of Mr. Stead, "is as ignorant as he is head-strong," did not hesitate long as to his course of action. Mr. Stead says that Mr. Chamberlain began by "trying to make a military union of the colonies" and Sir Wilfred Laurier checkmated him. Then, according to Mr. Stead, he tried to induce the colonies to pay 66 cents a head for the imperial army and navy, to raise the contribution to the British standard, "which every man, woman and child pays close upon \$6 per annum for war purposes," but the colonies laughed him to scorn.

AFTER ALL THIS, ACCORDING TO MR. Stead, one last resource, a loan, remained, for the wily Chamberlain. Mr. Stead says: "By means of a preferential tariff we imagined he could make the empire into a kind of a fiscal unit. But in order to do this it would be necessary to increase the cost of living of 41,000,000 citizens at home in order to put a little more profit into the pockets of 12,000,000 colonists over the sea. Among the 41,000,000 at home there are 12,000,000 who are always underfed, badly clothed and housed at handgrips with poverty. To starve these 12,000,000 at home to fatten 12,000,000 abroad commended itself to Mr. Chamberlain as imperial statesmanship. It need hardly be said that the 12,000,000 starvelings do not see it in that light. And Mr. Chamberlain's great coup has failed utterly; failed even tragically. The ministerial patient was ailing badly, no doubt. But Dr. Chamberlain, by way of cure, has simply put a bullet through his brain."

WHATEVER OPINION ONE MAY ENTERTAIN as to the Stead prejudices, it is generally understood that Mr. Stead has facilities for obtaining information and that he is a very close observer, and so among many people the emphasis which Mr. Stead places upon his prediction as to the results of Mr. Chamberlain's latest effort will be accepted. In this particular telegram to the World, Mr. Stead anticipated some of the cablegrams that were sent to newspapers in this country and he doubtless anticipates others when he says: "Whatever misleading nonsense may be telegraphed you as to the chances of his success, you can safely disregard them. He has no chance, absolutely none. Black ruin stares him in the

face. The gambler has staked his all upon his last card and lost. Then Mr. Chamberlain himself does not venture to believe that he can carry the constituencies with him, at least not until a second general election. Everyone else knows that he has upset the unionist appercart as badly as Dr. Jameson upset the appercart of Mr. Rhodes by the famous raid. There is a close parallel between the raid and the protectionist manifesto, but it is closest in the utter fiasco in which both have culminated."

MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLY disturbed because of the large increase during the past twelve months in immigration. The Washington correspondent for the Boston Herald directs attention to a report prepared by Commissioner General Sargent of the immigration bureau, showing what became of the vast hordes of immigrants who flocked to the shores of the United States during the fiscal year just ended. According to the figures a very small proportion of the aliens settled on the vast areas of land west of the Mississippi river. Commissioner Sargent referring to many of the immigrants says that they constitute the lowest grade of humanity in southern Europe and are decidedly a menace to the welfare of the country because of their tendency to huddle together in the cities.

THE REPORT MADE BY COMMISSIONER Sargent shows that of the total number of arrivals to the country during the past fiscal year, New York state alone assimilated 250,657. This is 30 per cent of the entire immigration. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania together received 567,405, or 66 per cent of the total. The states east of the Mississippi river received 741,765, leaving only 115,281, or 13 per cent to go west of the Mississippi. Eighty per cent of the immigration to this country is composed of the following eight peoples: Italian (south and north), Polish, Hebrew, Scandinavian, German, Slovak Croatian. Of the south Italians 52 per cent remained in the state of New York, 86 per cent went to the six states mentioned, including New York, and 98 per cent to states east of the Mississippi, leaving only 2 per cent who were destined to states west of the Mississippi. Of the Hebrews, 68 per cent went to New York state, 89 per cent to the six states named and 98 per cent to the states east of the Mississippi. Of the Croatsians 60 per cent went to the six states mentioned and only 12 per cent went to states west of the Mississippi. Of the Slovaks 83 per cent went to the six eastern states mentioned, and 2 per cent to the states west of the Mississippi.

IT IS FURTHER POINTED OUT IN COMMISSIONER Sargent's report that the Scandinavians, Germans and north Italians go in greater numbers to the western states. Only 18 per cent of the Scandinavians went to New York state, and 36 per cent to Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The same proportion went to states west of the Mississippi. Of the Germans 24 per cent went to New York state, 51 per cent to the six states mentioned and 24 per cent to states west of the Mississippi. Of the north Italians 28 per cent went to New York, 57 per cent to the six states named and 25 per cent to states west of the Mississippi. It may be mentioned that 86 per cent of the people coming from Italy are south Italians. They come from Sicily and Sardinia, and that part of Italy south of the river Po, while only 14 per cent are classed as north Italians.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1903, according to the report made by the commissioner of internal revenue, the annual collections showed, compared with the corresponding year ending in 1902, a decrease amounting to \$41,127,607. The receipts from the several sources of revenue are given as follows: Spirits, \$131,953,472; increase, \$10,815,459. Tobacco, \$43,014,810; decrease, \$8,423,114. Fermented liquors, \$45,547,856; decrease, \$24,441,046. Oleomargarine, \$736,753; decrease, \$2,207,709. Filled cheese, \$6,445; increase, \$6,421. Mixed flour, \$1,725; decrease, \$417.

Adulterated butter and process, or renovated, butter, \$151,558; increase, \$151,058. Banks, bankers, etc., \$899; increase, \$672. Miscellaneous, including legacies, \$6,826,761; decrease, \$17,027,004.

AN INDIANA SCIENTIST CLAIMS THAT HE is able to create life by a certain chemical process. Under date of Anderson, Ind., July 25, a correspondent for the Washington Post says: "With one ounce of common salt, six ounces of pure water, six ounces of 90 per cent alcohol, all mixed in an ordinary glass dish, and two ounces of aqua ammonia distributed in five small plates, and all covered by an air-tight glass tube, Dr. Charles W. Littlefield, of Alexandria, Ind., declares that he has created life in the form of thousands of atoms or animated substances similar to well-developed germs of life and trilobites. According to Dr. Littlefield, only ninety minutes were consumed while salt crystals were impregnated with the hydrogen and volatile magnetism of the chemical solution and transformed into living forces that immediately sought nourishment through mediums that Dr. Littlefield termed feeders, lacking a technical name. Microscopic examination showed that crystals not affected by the chemical mixture retain their original cubic or square form, while the magnetized crystals were of hexagon shape, with life first appearing in the center and spreading until the crystal was round, and finally of globular shape. A mass of life substances possessed magnetism of pronounced degree, radiating a power that would separate the crystals, and then draw them together again. It has not been determined what the germs of atoms would propagate. Dr. Littlefield says he repeated his experiments several times, all with practically the same successful results."

AN UNUSUAL REQUISITION WAS RECENTLY made upon the United States treasurer by the sub-treasurer at San Francisco. This requisition called for \$5,000 in nickels and \$2,000 in one-cent pieces. Referring to this requisition, a representative of the Washington Times says: "From any part of the country except the Pacific coast this demand would not have attracted more than passing notice. In California, however, the use of coins of the small denominations, particularly nickels and one-cent pieces, is practically unknown. The requisition received today is the first of its kind in the history of Mr. Roberts' long career in the treasury. No information was obtainable here as to the cause of the demand, but Mr. Roberts believes that the big department stores are directly responsible. He predicts that newspapers from the coast will contain advertisements of special sales on articles, such as the big eastern and middle west stores are accustomed to listing at prices ending in odd cents. Pennies and nickels are as scarce on the Pacific coast as are silver dollars in the District of Columbia. Nickels are practically unknown, though there have been a few one-cent pieces in circulation since the Spanish-American war. A requisition for a small supply of one-cent pieces was made by the San Francisco subtreasury at the time when the war revenue act went into effect."

GREAT EXCITEMENT WAS OCCASIONED IN vatican circles recently by the announcement that "the fisherman's ring" had been lost and newspaper readers throughout the world who have greedily devoured every thing with respect to the recent illness and death of the late pope have heard much concerning this jewel. A writer in the Chicago Record-Herald explains: "The ring of the fisherman, which is said to have been stolen from the hand of the dead Pope Leo, and which is nowhere to be found in the vatican, was the official seal used by the pope in all his personal documents and private letters. The origin of the ring was a custom adopted many centuries ago by the popes in order to keep alive the memory of the poor fisherman of Galilee. Every one of the popes since that time has worn and used a signet ring which bore the device of St. Peter seated in a boat and drawing a net from the waves. The authorities as to the date of the origin of the custom are not agreed. Mabillon claims that no evidence exists as to the precise