

# CURRENT TOPICS

**GENERAL MILES FORMALLY RETIRED** from the head of the army August 8. He immediately left for San Francisco to take part in the national encampment of the G. A. R. and en route was given cordial receptions by the people. Newspaper dispatches report that General Miles was a candidate for commander in chief of the Grand Army and some republican papers insist that he is also cultivating a presidential boom. General Miles took occasion to deny that he was a candidate for commander in chief of the Grand Army and announced that he would second the nomination of General John C. Black. It is also denied that General Miles has any serious thought of becoming the candidate for the presidency although his name is frequently mentioned in connection with that high honor.

**CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM HAS BEEN DIRECTED** at President Roosevelt because of his failure to express to General Miles the thanks of the American people for his faithful services as a soldier. On the occasion of General Miles' retirement, the following order was issued: "Washington, Aug. 9, 1903.—The retirement from active service by the president on August 8, 1903, of Lieutenant General Nelson A. Miles, U. S. A., by operation of law, under the provisions of the act of congress approved June 30, 1882, is announced. Lieutenant General Miles will proceed to his home. The travel enjoined is necessary for the public service. By order of the secretary of war, H. C. Corbin, adjutant general, major general, U. S. A." It is pointed out that this was a studied effort to heap an indignity upon the retiring general. Corbin, who was in fact subordinate to General Miles, and who is one of the general's bitter enemies, was chosen to sign the very cold order of retirement. It is said that this is the only instance where a president deliberately insulted the retiring lieutenant general. On the contrary, on all former occasions the president has seized the opportunity to say a kind word in farewell to the chief soldier. General Miles does not, however, appear to be suffering greatly under the snub sought to be administered to him by the Roosevelt administration. Many newspapers that have heretofore been very friendly to Mr. Roosevelt have seriously criticised his conduct on this occasion.

**GENERAL MILES GAVE AN INTERESTING** interview to a representative of the Omaha Bee. The general said that his recent trip to the Philippines had convinced him that it is a mistake to hold on to those islands; that conditions there are not such as are favorable to American colonization. The general further said: "The islands are densely populated and the population is congested to a degree that is hard for the Americans not familiar with the situation to understand. Aside from the expense and inconvenience of the situation, the matter involves a policy that is, I think, against our best interests. We are forced into a position alongside of Russia at a point where we would be stronger if we had the whole Pacific ocean between us. Russia is certain to dominate the Asiatic coast of the Pacific, just as we dominate the American coast. In event of war growing out of the complications due to Russian and other European maneuvers in China and Japan, our position in the Philippines forces us to take part. Russia is friendly to the United States and is anxious to remain on friendly terms with us. We have a chance to build up a fine trade with Russia and it is unwise to jeopardize this commerce for the sake of what the Philippine archipelago will bring to us. The possession of the islands is not likely to bring with it any positive advantage to the United States and they will always be a menace to peace and a source of expenditure even with peace assured. China is the bone of contention just now and the United States is likely to be drawn into the war that seems certain to grow from the present situation."

**VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY** have recently been visited by enormous swarms of mosquitoes. At Toronto, S. D., about 9 o'clock in the evening without the slightest warning, a dense cloud of mosquitoes settled over the town and for a brief time were practically in com-

plete possession. There were billions of the insects and they fairly swarmed about the electric lights and in front of every building from which a light shone through the doors and windows. Millions of the pests were destroyed by men and boys lighting newspapers and burning them. Those not destroyed left the town as suddenly as they came. The next morning the sidewalks and streets were covered with dead mosquitoes.

**THAT RACE PREJUDICE IS NOT SECTIONAL** but extends to all sections of the country as well, indeed, to all quarters of the globe, is well understood and yet many people will be surprised by a statement recently published in the Washington Star. This statement is credited by the Star to "an Indiana democrat of national prominence whose name, if mentioned, would be recognized by every politician." This gentleman was discussing the value of the negro vote in Indiana and Illinois and speaking to a representative of the Star, he said: "You would be surprised to know that there is likelihood of the negro vote in Indiana and Illinois, which has been assured to the republicans by President Roosevelt's course, being offset by the loss of white republican votes. That is, however, a fact, arising out of the existing race conditions in those states. No one can have failed to observe the state of public sentiment against the colored race in Indiana and Illinois. It is more pronounced in Indiana, but it is growing worse every day, and no one knows where it will stop. Now we are beginning to observe a sentiment among the whites, on the political phase of the situation, similar to that of the southerners. The republican party is being looked upon as the party of the negro, and is being deserted by white republicans who share the race prejudice. That feeling is especially noticeable in the small towns and crops out in the municipal elections. It is a question how far that feeling will extend, but it is growing and will have its weight in future elections."

**FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS THEODORE** Laffin, living near Mishawaka, Ind., has labored in the preparation of a book entitled "The Lost Children of Israel Found Beyond the Arctic." A Mishawaka dispatch to the Philadelphia Press says that day and night Laffin, who was practically a hermit, studied and prepared manuscript. His hope was the solution of the problem concerning the destination of the lost tribes of Israel. He failed to secure publication for his work and on August 8 died of a broken heart.

**THAT BEAUTIFUL SONG, "THE HOLY CITY,"** is known the world over, and many will be interested in learning from the New York Press that the first voice who raised the inspiring cry of "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Sing, for the night is o'er," was that of Mrs. Florence Maybrick, now confined in an English jail under the charge of murder. "The Holy City" was composed by "Stephen Adams," who in real life was Michael Maybrick, a baritone vocalist and a brother of the man whom Mrs. Maybrick was convicted of murdering. The Press says: "The Maybricks were sons of a wealthy Liverpool manufacturer. The younger, Michael, chose a musical career, while the elder remained in commerce and married a young American girl. He was an enthusiastic yachtsman, and aboard his elegant little vessel, usually moored in the Mersey, many enjoyable musical evenings were spent, Michael, the composer and singer, often being of the merry party. It was on one of these occasions that Mrs. Maybrick's brother-in-law produced the manuscript of a new song he had just composed. It was "The Holy City." Sitting at the piano in the little cabin, he prevailed on his sister-in-law, Florence, to try it over. She was a good musician and read at sight. Thus her voice was the first to sing the song which afterward achieved phenomenal success. But this did not come at once. The occasion referred to was about the year 1888. Michael Maybrick tells the story of how the publishers rejected "The Holy City" again and again because it was too somber in tone. From him they wanted another "Nancy Lee" or "Blue Alsatian Mountains." Meantime the woman who had first sung

it was convicted of murder, sentenced to death and finally sent to prison for life."

**PROVIDED IN THE RULES OF THE DULUTH,** Minn., police department is "compulsory baseball." A correspondent for the New York Tribune, speaking of this novel rule, says: "The patrolmen are to report for baseball the same as for target practice or drill. This outdoor exercise is expected to keep the officers in fine physical trim, working off surplus flesh, hardening the muscles, and, incidentally, teaching them to catch whatever comes their way. One veteran of the department objected very strenuously to the new order. He had never been in a game in his life, yet he performed a feat at the preliminary game on Saturday that probably had never been equalled in the history of the great national game. There were three men on bases and two strikes on him. Then he cleared the bases and brought in four runs without so much as touching the ball. He got his base on balls and, not having played before, started to steal second, despite the fact that there was a man on that base and another at third. The opposing team of police got so excited trying to get him out that every man on the patch was able to cross the plate, and the kicking veteran was informed that he had made a home run without hitting the ball."

**ONE OF THE MOST INEXPLICABLE MYSTERIES** connected with the forbidden city of Peking is reported by the Boston correspondent for the San Francisco Chronicle. According to this correspondent, the famous sacred jeweled tree belonging to the imperial family of China has appeared in the Boston art museum. The Chronicle correspondent says: "For more than two centuries this treasure, made of native Chinese precious stones, standing two and a half feet high and radiating a brilliant mass of colors, had been closely guarded day and night, few persons knowing of its existence or where it was kept. Then its disappearance several years ago caused a furor among Chinese officials, who searched the empire and then the world for it, but without success. Recently the tree appeared suddenly in the Boston art museum, arriving there as mysteriously as it had disappeared from China. An effort has been made to have it returned to China, but as it was stolen years before the Boxer trouble, it is lost to the Chinese forever."

**GREAT DIFFICULTY HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED** in Greece in obtaining executioners for the death penalty. According to a writer in the Chicago Chronicle, these difficulties were at last surmounted by giving to a murderer the choice between his own death or acceptance of the office of permanent executioner. The man lives alone in an old tower built by Venetians on an islet outside the port of Nauplia, where necessaries are taken to him every morning by the boatman, who is careful to exchange no word with him. Twice a year a steamer calls for him and his instruments of death, and he leaves upon a tour of executions.

**A DELICATE OPERATION WAS RECENTLY** performed in the Massachusetts Homeopathic hospital. By this operation a woman was saved from total blindness. The Boston correspondent for the Chicago Chronicle describes the operation in this way: "Frog skin was grafted around her eye, where the flesh is most sensitive, and the process was attended with great danger. The flesh about the eye had become bruised and the skin became affected. Both to save the eyesight and to prevent the socket from having a bald, hideous appearance the graft had to be made. Frog skin was used because no human skin was available. Grafts from the white skin of a frog were taken and applied to the eye. The patient has fully recovered. The natural skin and frog skin have coalesced so as to be indistinguishable the one from the other."

**GREAT BRITAIN'S POSTOFFICE REVENUE** for the fiscal year ending in 1903 amounted to \$75,024,690. This represents an increase of \$2,695,340 over the preceding year. During the same period the expenditures amounted to \$54.