

# CURRENT TOPICS

IT IS REPORTED FROM MANILA THAT leaders of the federal party are preparing a petition to the United States congress asking that the Philippine commission be reorganized. A Manila cablegram to the Chicago Tribune says: "They will ask that the membership be increased by the addition of two Filipinos and one American, and also that the salary of the Filipino members be increased because the auditor, the collector of customs, the attorney general, solicitor, and treasurer receive salaries of \$5,000 in excess of those paid to the present native commissioners. The petition also will set forth the desire that the secretary of finance, secretary of justice, secretary of commerce, and secretary of police, be so appointed that two natives may hold office as secretaries. It is believed that this is the motive for a concerted demand for the appointment of more native officeholders at higher salaries."

STATISTICS RECENTLY GATHERED SHOWING the various employments for women in Great Britain are attracting considerable attention in the newspapers of the world. A writer in the New Orleans Times Democrat referring to these statistics, says: "It appears that in England and Wales alone there are nearly 44,000 women bootmakers, 3,239 ropemakers, 4,730 saddlemakers, 5,140 who make a living by gardening, 3,850 butchers, 27,707 who keep body and soul together by tending bar, nearly 3,000 cyclemakers, and—the highest figure of all—117,640 tailors. It appears that there are female bailiffs, boatmen, boiler-makers, bricklayers, iron founders, plumbers, plasterers, slaughterers and veterinary surgeons. One woman in the kingdom is set down as a dock laborer, and another as a road laborer, while 279 are undertakers, and 12 are shepherds."

THE HOUSE IN WHICH CHARLES DICKENS was born is to be sold at auction in October, and an effort is being made to purchase the building and preserve it along with other "Dickens relics." A London correspondent for the New York American, referring to this plan, says: "Two schemes toward this end have been suggested. One is that the Dickens fellowship should provide the necessary money out of its funds and the other that the municipality should find the money. Forster, in his 'Life of Dickens,' makes the following interesting reference to the novelist's birthplace: 'He has often told me that he remembered the small front garden to the house from which he was taken away when he was two years old, and where, watched by a nurse through the low kitchen window almost level with the gravel walk, he trotted about with something to eat, and his little elder sister with him.'"

MR. ROOSEVELT'S POLITICAL MANAGERS are said to be seriously disturbed because of the accumulated evidences that organized labor is disposed to object to Mr. Roosevelt's election to the office he now holds. Walter Wellman, the Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says: "Organized labor's crusade against President Roosevelt over the case of Bookbinder Miller is attaining serious proportions, and the members of the administration are becoming more anxious as to the effect which this warfare may have upon next year's elections. The letters sent out by the central labor union of this city, asking for an expression of opinion from labor organizations throughout the country, are meeting with quick and cordial response. It is already apparent that labor unions generally are disposed to indorse the action of the Washington organization, which, by resolution, condemned the president's reinstatement of Foreman Miller and declaration in favor of the 'open shop' as an act 'unfriendly to union labor.'"

CHAIRMAN SALEN OF THE OHIO DEMOCRATIC state executive committee, recently proposed to Chairman Dick of the republican committee that the campaign expenditures of both sides be limited, and that each committee publish a sworn statement just prior to election, showing the total amount thus expended. Referring to this proposition, John H. Clarke, the democratic nominee for United States senator, in a public speech,

said: "There are more than enough men in the state suspected of having obtained their positions by questionable methods. I believe I am of firm enough fibre to refuse even a certificate of election were it tendered me if tainted with suspicion of its having been obtained by improper use of money, and that no such suspicion shall be attached to my election if I shall be successful in this canvass, I make this public declaration of my intentions."

CHAIRMAN DICK OF THE REPUBLICAN committee declined to accept Chairman Salen's proposition, and in explanation said: "Since your party did not comply with the law when it was in force, I cannot now understand your great anxiety to carry out its provisions after it has been repealed. So far as the republican state committee is concerned, its books are open to the inspection of all whose business it is to examine them. Beyond this the committee declines to go." It will be observed that while the republican chairman said that the books of the republican state committee are open to inspection, he took pains to say they "are open to the inspection of all whose business it is to examine them," and he added by way of emphasis, "beyond this the committee declines to go." In other words, the republican committee intends to use so much money and in such a questionable way that it is not willing that the character of its expenditures be made known to the people.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE TROUBLES IN the British ministry are not disposed of by the retirement of Joseph Chamberlain. Austin Chamberlain, the son, remains a member of the cabinet, and the London correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says: "A well-known Londoner who has been behind the scenes of British politics for many years says that Mr. Chamberlain's resignation is only part of a very carefully thought-out scheme. According to this Londoner, Austin Chamberlain will remain in the cabinet, and the father's voice will be heard through the son." It is further predicted by the same authority that "it is almost certain there will be a general election, when the liberals will come into power, but the liberals cannot count on a long tenure of office. Then there will be a turn in the tide and Mr. Chamberlain will be carried on the floor to the premiership."

SIR JOHN NUTTING OF DUBLIN, WHO IS now visiting the United States, was recently interviewed by a representative of the Chicago Record-Herald, and speaking of British politics, said: "Chamberlain is one of the greatest figures in English public life today, and he will be a greater one in the future. When he outlines his policy and backs it up with the figures with which he is familiar in connection with colonial affairs, there will be a change of sentiment in his favor. He has not yet done more than indicate what he proposes to do with the tariff. The majority of the people just now seem opposed to him and his policy, but his enemies need only wait a short time to find out what he will do to turn the tide in his favor and overwhelm them by the force and logic of his position."

THAT THESE ARE TRYING DAYS FOR MR. Balfour cannot be doubted by those who carefully observe conditions in the British ministry. Mr. Balfour became prime minister in July, 1902, upon the retirement of Lord Salisbury. A writer in the Chicago Record-Herald describes in an interesting way the embarrassments with which Mr. Balfour has been confronted, saying: "He found his party with an overwhelming majority in parliament, and the loyalty of its parliamentary representation was shown in the support of the education bill, which was bitterly assailed throughout the kingdom. There can be no doubt that this bill was excessively unpopular in a broad sense, or that if it could have been brought before the country as a clearly defined issue the strength of the conservatives would have been greatly reduced. But there was no appeal to the electorate, and the conservative members of parliament accepted it generally without a thought of dissent."

IT IS POINTED OUT BY THIS SAME WRITER that nothing could indicate more conclusively the great advantage of position which Mr. Balfour had over his opponents. It seemed as though it was impossible to budge the government, and in spite of the recent war office scandal it would probably still be impregnable except for Chamberlain's revolutionary scheme. This was first expounded May 15 and was amplified May 28. It proposed a tariff on food stuffs with compensation to the workingmen in old age pensions, included a promise of higher wages, declared for preferential tariffs with the colonies, and suggested a retaliatory tariff war against Germany and the United States. Mr. Balfour accepted the scheme by saying that he was in agreement with Mr. Chamberlain, but he raised doubts about the food tax and spoke generally in a rather tentative manner.

SINCE THAT TIME AND FOR A PERIOD OF four months, according to the Record-Herald writer, the cabinet has occupied the most anomalous position imaginable. According to this writer several of the cabinet members were uncompromising free traders, and as hostile to Chamberlain's views as any liberal could be. Yet there have been hints of modification and compromise, and the premier, with his open mind and his tentative way of putting things, has kept the country in the utmost confusion. Even after the publication of his pamphlet this week there was doubt as to just where he stood, and a liberal paper suggested recently that lights of different colors should be prepared to announce to the world on the occasion of his Sheffield speech whether he was protectionist or free trader or still on the fence.

IT HAS BEEN REPORTED ON SEVERAL occasions that Mr. Chamberlain was willing to omit certain features from his scheme. But the Record-Herald writer points out that the "general explosion" that has just occurred has put an end to rumor and dispelled doubt. This writer adds: "Balfour proclaims himself a Chamberlain man while accepting Chamberlain's resignation, making this distinction only that if there has been any difference between them it has been with regard to the practicability of the proposal, which would seem to require on the part of the colonies a limitation in the all-round development of a protective policy, and on the part of this country a preference in favor of important colonial products." This difference would not eliminate the hostility of free traders to Mr. Balfour's program, which is one of retaliatory tariffs against foreign countries, and it will be curious if more free trade cabinet members do not follow the example of Mr. Ritchie and Lord George Hamilton and resign. That the premier can now command sufficient parliamentary support to maintain his government through the storm of debate is of course highly improbable. The Pall Mall Gazette describes the crisis not inaptly as the 'most extraordinary in the whole history of parliamentary government,' and the titular leader who has brought it about or permitted it to be brought about to the dissipation of his own superior forces must suffer a serious loss of prestige."

SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO WILLIAM HEDRICK was sentenced to the Missouri penitentiary from Butler county to serve three years for grand larceny. After serving six months, Hedrick escaped from the prison and subsequently located in Arkansas. There he became a farmer, married and raised a family of five children. For nearly seventeen years he resided in Arkansas, enjoying the confidence and respect of his neighbors. Finally he was discovered and returned to Jefferson City to serve out his time. A dispatch to the St. Louis Republic, under date of Jefferson City, September 22, says: "Governor Dockery today, after reviewing the case, decided to give him his liberty in consideration of his endeavor to be a good citizen. It is the first instance on record at the Missouri penitentiary where a man received a pardon after an attempt to escape."

THE MONUMENT ERECTED BY THE PEOPLE of New Jersey on the battlefield of Antietam was dedicated September 17. Mr. Roose-