

CURRENT TOPICS

PERHAPS THE MOST EXCLUSIVE ELEVATOR in the world is the one provided at the capitol at Washington, D. C., for the supreme court of the United States. This elevator can be used only by the nine justices of the supreme court, and no one would for a moment consider entering it except as the guest of one of these nine privileged men. The elevator goes from the ground floor of the capitol to the main floor, on which is located the supreme court of the United States.

IN THE RECENT SPEECH OF QUEEN WILHELMINA before the states general at The Hague, among the bills announced was one "providing for rest on the Sabbath." Although this bill is ostensibly declared to be a measure "for the moral rectitude and temperance of the nation," in some quarters it is regarded as an attack upon certain religious factions of the Netherlands. On account of this view, the bill is said to be unconstitutional, as special provision is made in the constitution for the liberty of conscience, complete social equality and independent practice of religion. According to the New York Times, "the bill in question demands 'the absolute tranquility of the Sabbath,' the suspension of all bodily toil, the closing of all shops or places of business or of amusement, and the prohibition of assemblies other than those gathered for religious worship."

AN INTERESTING CONTROVERSY IS ON IN Derby, Conn., in which a suit hinges on the question as to whether the legal definition of sunset depends on the almanacs or the time at which the sun actually sinks below the horizon. A special dispatch from Derby to the New York Times, under date of October 3, tells the story in this way: "Mayor Sullivan ordered the arrest of Irving S. Coan for driving a rubber-tired carriage without a light, the law requiring lights one hour after sundown. I court Coan asserted that, according to the almanacs, he had four minutes to spare before it was necessary to light up. On this ground the city court discharged him. Coan then sued Mayor Sullivan for false arrest. Mayor Sullivan's attorneys hold that the sun had actually sunk beneath the hills more than an hour before the arrest. The hills are high. Each side has agreed to take the case to the higher courts in case of defeat."

A REPORT WAS RECENTLY ISSUED SETTING forth in detail a survey of the birth rates of various parts of the world during the year 1901. According to a writer in the New York-Tribune, it appears that three German cities stand at the head of the list—Essen, with 47.1 per 1,000; Mannheim, with 43.9, and Nuremberg, with 41.3. Only one non-German city rose to 40 births per 1,000, and that was Rosario, in the Argentine. Of cities possessing more than a million inhabitants, Moscow comes first, with 30.9, and Vienna, London, Berlin, New York and Paris follow with a decimal in excess of 21 per 1,000. Rio Janeiro is at the bottom of the list of large cities, with a rate of 17.4.

IN LONDON AN ATTEMPT IS TO BE MADE to solve the domestic problem by the formation of a new club called the Arachne club, which is to be composed entirely of women. This club has for an object the purpose to train young women for domestic service, eliminating scrubbing and similar rough work, which is to be left to charwomen. It is expected that this course of training can be completed in nine months, three devoted to ordinary housework and six to cooking, and at the end of the course the domestics will have to pass an examination, for which certificates will be given.

THE HEROIC CONDUCT OF A YOUNG LADY of Linares, Mex., during the recent yellow fever epidemic there, has attracted the attention of President Diaz and the Mexican congress and a medal has been conferred upon her. The name of this young woman is Miss Manuela Flores, and she is the daughter of the mayor of Linares. When the epidemic of yellow fever was raging in the city, thousands of people were stricken and among these was Mayor Flores. His daughter assumed the duties of mayor and has capably di-

rected the affairs of the city. The population of the city was reduced from 15,000 to less than 3,000 as a result of death and the panic due to the epidemic. All the city officials were stricken with the fever and died, and the burden of directing the affairs of the city fell upon Miss Flores, the governor giving her full power to act as mayor of the city.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT AT WASHINGTON has received a report from Consul General Hughes at Coburg, Germany, which report tends to show the marked falling off in the doll trade of the world. The Washington correspondent of the San Francisco Chronicle says: "According to Consul Hughes, who reviews the situation under the caption, 'The Doll Trade of Thuringia,' the trade with the United States for the year ending June 30, 1903, amounted to \$1,840,013 out of a total export of \$3,552,607, but Thuringia's trade with the other nations slumped badly. England did a very poor doll business with Thuringia. No demand seemed to exist for dolls. The cause of this is hard to tell. Canada did somewhat better in the cheap class of goods, but even this trade might be much improved. Australia and other British colonies have not ordered anything like the same amount of goods as in previous years. Austria-Hungary may be said to have practically stopped buying in Thuringia. Switzerland, Netherlands and Belgium each are doing only a small business in low grade goods. Argentine Republic has done a small business for years which seems to remain about the same; the same may be said for Brazil. Cuba's trade has not picked up since the war. The Central American trade has never been large, and of late it has fallen off entirely. The slump is traceable in various nations of the world. French competition is believed to be responsible in some cases for the falling off of Thuringia's trade."

BECAUSE OF THEIR PRIDE OF RACE, THE Chickahominy Indians of King William county, Virginia, have disfranchised themselves, and not one of them can vote under the new constitution of Virginia. A telegram to the New York Tribune, under date of Richmond, Va., September 25, says: "The new organic law provides for only two classes, and as the Indians could not be registered under the class for whites, they refused to be classed with the negroes, and as a consequence refused to be registered at all. Their pride of birth will cost them their votes, and they have no redress, as the number of Indians in the state is so small that it was not thought necessary to provide a special class for them under the franchise clause of the new constitution."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED MINE Workers of America, John Mitchell, has written a book on labor. According to the St. Paul Dispatch, "Organized Labor; Its Problems, Purposes and Ideals, and the Present and Future of American Wage Earners," is the title. Seven of the fifty-eight chapters are devoted to the coal strike of last year, and President Roosevelt is commended for his appointment of the anthracite coal strike commission, which act is termed "a landmark in the history of labor." Mr. Mitchell adds that "the president of the United States thus asserted and upheld the paramount interest of the public in conflicts affecting the injury and welfare of the community." The history of the strike is fully given, and the account is free from invective or denunciation of the operators. Strikes as a last resort are defended, but both sides to an industrial dispute are urged to meet each other fairly and exhaust all means toward a peaceful settlement before such conflicts become necessary.

THE POPULAR IDEA THAT THERE ARE NO "good" Indians except the dead ones, is in a fair way to be disproved by the annual report of Major G. L. Scott, acting Indian agent of the Chippewa reservation, which has just been issued. This report declares that in that reservation alone there are 219 Indians who can read, and 270 who can converse in English sufficiently to make themselves understood. There are 418 children of school age and 57 per cent of the Indians obtain a living by civilized pursuits. The St. Paul Dispatch, referring to this report, says that Agent Scott esti-

mated the amount of snake root gathered as 3,000 pounds and this was sold for \$1,500. Other products sold for \$7,500, making a total of \$9,500 earned by the Indians during the year.

REFERRING TO THE OCCUPATIONS OF the Chippewa Indians, and the results of their labors, the St. Paul Dispatch quotes the report as follows: "The Chippewas cultivated 400 acres and put under fence 2,700 acres. They raised 1,500 bushels of potatoes and gathered 1,500 tons of hay. They own 125 horses, 80 cattle, 300 swine and 600 fowls. They hauled in by their own teams 310,079 pounds of freight, the value earned being \$3,117. They sold to the government of their own products \$4,431, and to others \$9,500. There are three church buildings and three Catholic missionaries and one Episcopal. There are 39 baptized Indians, who are also communicants, and 67 Indians baptized only. The money spent for education was \$4,600, and for church work was \$280. There were 67 births and 1 suicide. The actual birth rate is above the death rate, yet the statistics for 1899 show a total of 1,346, a loss of 26, but this is accounted for by the removal from the roll of Indians who have gone elsewhere and are on other pay rolls at different agencies."

THE NEW DIETARY SCHEME WENT INTO operation in the British navy recently, according to a London cablegram to the St. Louis Republic. It is said that the blue jackets and marines for the first time will be provided with jam and milk, and they also henceforth are to have five meals per diem. Under the former regime, a grateful country supplied the sailors with only three meals in twenty-four hours, and Jack and Joey were officially presumed to go without food between supper time, at 4 o'clock on one day, and 5 o'clock breakfast on the next day. The gaps, needless to say, had to be filled in by private expenditure at the canteen. In order to supply each man with rations of two ounces of the jam, three-quarters of an ounce of sweetened milk, about 15,000 pounds of the former and 6,000 tins of the latter will be required daily. In addition the crews will also receive half an ounce of coffee daily, which makes a total of 3,750 pounds for the entire service.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE OUR ACQUISITION of the Philippine islands, according to Public Opinion, we have a statement of the total population of the islands, the approximate accuracy of which may be safely accepted. Public Opinion says: "The new government census is completed so far as the main labor, that of enumeration, is concerned and needs only the revision of the tabulators. Subject to that, the figures for the total population are 6,976,574, which are remarkably close to the estimate of 6,961,339 made by the American census officials in 1900 and the estimate of 6,975,073 made by the bureau of insular affairs in the war department in 1902. In round numbers, then, we may conveniently say there are seven million people in our Philippine dependency."

THE KEYS THAT LOCKED THE GREAT gates of the Bastille in Paris, France, at the time of its fall were subsequently sent to America, and for nearly a century remained in the possession of the family of the Frenchman who took them from the famous prison. A writer in the Kansas City Journal, giving the history of these famous relics, says: "When the mob stormed the prison on July 14, 1789, a Parisian, Carrier Lechastel, is said to have been the first to rush over the drawbridge as it fell. It was he, at any rate, who overtook a fleeing jailer and took the keys from him. The mob immediately stuck the keys on the end of a spike and an immense throng paraded with them through the streets. They were considered one of the most valuable trophies of the revolution. Lechastel kept the keys and they remained in his family until 1859, when a descendant of the family emigrated to America, taking them with him. Eventually the keys were sold to John Hamilton, of St. Louis, who kept them for twenty-five years, exhibiting them from time to time, when they were sold to a Canadian. The keys at present are very old and rusty. The largest of them is twelve inches long and is quite