

CURRENT TOPICS

THE TREATY WITH HAYTI WAS RATIFIED by the senate in executive session February 1. This treaty provides that natives of Hayti who may have been naturalized heretofore in the United States or who may be naturalized hereafter shall lose their citizenship in this country and become citizens of Hayti when they return to that country and reside there for a period of two years. The Washington correspondent for the Denver News, referring to this treaty, says: "The treaty discriminates against Hayti, and in favor of all other naturalized citizens. It tends to show the contempt with which the rights of the negroes are regarded in the United States. Such a treaty would not have been thought of against naturalized citizens born in an Anglo-Saxon or a Latin country. There were only five votes against the treaty. Three democrats and two republicans. Senators Teller and Patterson were of the three that took the ground that the colored man, wherever he was born, who becomes a citizen, should be protected in his citizenship as much as a man of white blood."

THE COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE British government for the purpose of making suggestions as to how to make the war department more efficient has advised that "the appointment of military members not hitherto closely connected with existing methods and who therefore are not likely to be embarrassed by the traditions of the system which is to be radically changed." It is reported by the London correspondent for the New York World that this means the abolishing of the post of commander-in-chief now held by Lord Roberts. In fact this correspondent says that with the approval of the king the government has decided to appoint an army council similar to the admiralty, to abolish the \$25,000 office of commander-in-chief of the army, and to create the new post of inspector-general, whose chief duty it will be to inspect and report on the efficiency of the forces, confining himself to facts without expressing any opinion on policies.

THE MILEAGE QUESTION PROVIDES AN INTERESTING subject for discussion at the Capital City. There was no recess between the special and the regular session of congress, and yet many members insisted that they were entitled to draw mileage, not only for the special session, but also for the regular session. The New York World says that the republican majority of the house were willing to vote this mileage money for traveling to their homes and back although the traveling had not been done. The World points out that "the legal larceny would have varied from a comparatively small sum for the New Yorker to \$1,200 to each for some Pacific slope members." The situation with respect to this proposed steal is described by the World in this way: "A provision to pay this mileage was actually drafted into a pending bill. It was even carried by a yea and nay vote. But when tellers were demanded, when every member knew that he must go on record, not one man stood out for the steal. Its open advocates in private speech, the men who had raised their voices for it in oral vote, were afraid to stand out in the open. And now these virtuous statesmen are hoping that the senate will restore the mileage item in the urgent deficiency bill and 'compel the house to accept it.' Not if publicity can prevail! The same fear of public opinion which impelled the mileage grabbers to unhand their spoil will again be potent to restrain them. Thieves do not plunder where a bright light burns."

IT WOULD BE WELL IF IT COULD BE SAID of many of the men of this country that "A little child shall lead them" in the light of the excellent rules of citizenship laid down by an Italian boy, age 13 years, of New York city. That lad recently prepared an essay on citizenship for the City History club of New York. Among the rules laid down by this boy are the following: "If I want to be a good citizen I must be true to my country, true to my state and true to my city. If I do not vote I will not be doing my duty. I must have my own judgment to vote for the man I think is best qualified for the office

which he has been nominated for. If I don't I won't be doing my duty. I must not let anybody bribe me to vote for a man I think not fitted for an office. It will also be my duty to be industrious and self-supporting, so as not to be a burden and a nuisance to the public. I must pay taxes, so that the government can be maintained and the officers of the government paid, because the government is for my good. When it is necessary I must help to maintain order and always be ready for public service, and in case of war serve my country. I should know the history of my country and be an intelligent reader and a close observer of current events."

AN INTERESTING STORY IS TOLD BY THE Port Jervis correspondent for the New York World. This correspondent says: "Irving Cox had a leg cut off by a train just before the holidays, and the leg was placed in the receiving vault of the cemetery. A few days ago Cox complained to his wife that there was something hurting his severed leg. He became so nervous that members of his family went to the receiving vault, opened the box containing the severed limb and removed a bit of frozen sand. Although Cox did not know that this had been done, it is said that the instant the sand was removed his pain ceased, and upon their return they found him happy and free from the annoyance."

THE QUESTION OF THE PURCHASE OF railways by the state has been seriously discussed in the press. The Paris correspondent for the New York World says: "The chamber debated the purchase of the systems of the Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest and the Chemin de Fer du Midi, and finished by maintaining the status quo, which shows the management of French railways is organized in a superior manner. Here is the sum of the debate. The state gives charters to the railway systems and guarantees the shareholders in the companies a minimum dividend. But at the end of a certain time the railway lines revert to the state, which is bound to pay the companies only for their rolling stock and an amount sufficient to make up a reasonable dividend upon sums expended. At present the state can count upon all French railways becoming its property about the middle of the century. Without loosing its purse strings it will receive from them an income of more than 600,000,000 francs (\$120,000,000), representing a capital of \$4,000,000,000."

IT IS POINTED OUT BY THIS PARIS CORRESPONDENT that those who favor the railway purchase propose that the government borrow \$4,000,000,000 in order to get at once what this correspondent says it "will have for nothing in fifty years." Referring to this proposition the World correspondent adds: "This is a bad financial scheme, as M. Rouvier, the minister of finance, explained successfully. But his colleague, Camille Pelletan, belongs to a party which denounced and characterized as criminal the agreements made with the companies. M. Pelletan therefore favors the purchase, but he made a mistake in declaring he was not in accord with his colleague. Rouvier is the correspondent of an important journal in South Delpeche, Toulouse, whose influence is considerable in the chamber of deputies. This is the first sign of a split in the cabinet. The nationalists at once attempted to exploit this difference between the two ministers, and they asked permission to interpellate the cabinet upon its financial policy and thus allowed it to be seen that their whole policy tends to a ministerial crisis. It may be that this incident will bring together again the majority, which has been a little upset by the imprudence of Pelletan."

REAR ADMIRAL CAPPS, CHIEF CONSTRUCTOR of the navy, recently recommended to Secretary of the Navy Moody that the historic ship Constitution should be retained in ordinary at the navy yard at Boston, and repaired from time to time, so that she was to be preserved indefinitely. The Washington Star says: "The Constitution will be made into a naval museum, the nucleus of which is now at the Boston yard. The secretary also has decided to name the next

battleship appropriated for by congress Constitution, in order that the name may be preserved in the navy. It had been proposed to rebuild the old Constitution and fit her as a training ship, but this was believed to be impracticable. The decision of the secretary to preserve the historic vessel is the result of a movement to preserve the Constitution, which might be likened to the agitation when Oliver Wendell Holmes saved her by writing his poem, 'Old Ironsides,' beginning, 'Aye, tear her tattered ensign down.' Charles Francis Adams some time ago wrote to Secretary Moody about the deterioration of the Constitution. The Massachusetts Historical association sent a petition to the house of representatives asking that the vessel be repaired, so that she might be placed in commission as a training ship. Rear Admiral Capps was sent by Secretary Moody to Boston to inspect the ship. He found the planking in fairly good condition, but many of the timbers were rotten. He reported that the old craft could not be made fit for service unless she were practically reconstructed."

SOME INTERESTING STATISTICS AS TO THE various generals who served in the civil war were recently presented in a talk before the Oneida (N. Y.) Historical society at Utica, by State Historian Hugh Hastings. According to the New York Times, Mr. Hastings recalled that at the outbreak of the war for the Union Ulysses Grant was a tanner; McClellan a railroad president; Sherman a banker in New Orleans; Rosecrans, Hooker, Slocum, Halleck and Burnside were also out of the service; Thomas was a major in the Second cavalry; Meade a captain of engineers; Sheridan had just been promoted first lieutenant in Grant's old regiment, the Fourth Infantry; Hancock was a captain in the quartermaster's department; Schofield was a first lieutenant of artillery; Granger was a first lieutenant. Most of the officers who afterwar became distinguished in the confederate service, had continued in the army from the time they were graduated from West Point to the breaking out of the war. Lee was colonel of the First cavalry; Albert Sidney Johnson colonel of the Second cavalry; J. E. B. Stuart a captain of cavalry, Hood first lieutenant of cavalry; Joe Johnson quartermaster general of the United States army; Beauregard captain of engineers; Longstreet a major in the pay corps; Stephen D. Lee first lieutenant of artillery; Bragg had resigned in 1856, and Stonewall Jackson was an instructor in the Washington and Lee University at Lexington, Va. While Grant was unquestionably the greatest fighter the war produced, Mr. Hastings added, to McClellan belongs the glory of standing as the most brilliant organizer.

CONSUMPTION OF EARTH AS FOOD IS SAID to be a common practice in Oriental countries. It is claimed that the people of China, New Caledonia and New Guinea, as well as those of the Malay archipelago are addicted to the habit. A writer in the New York Tribune says: "In Java and Sumatra the clay used undergoes a preliminary preparation for consumption, being mixed with water, reduced to a paste, and the sand and other hard substances removed. The clay is then formed into small cakes or tablets about as thick as a lead pencil and baked in an iron saucer. When the tablet emerges from this process it resembles a piece of dried pork. The Japanese frequently eat small figures, roughly modelled from clay, which resemble the animals turned out in pastry shops."

THE FIRE-RESISTING PROPERTIES OF the material known as asbestos are well known. A writer in the New York Herald says that asbestos is found in Vermont, California, in the Joaquin valley and the Sierra Nevadas. In this district, Black Lake, Toleraine, Thetford, Danville, etc., are full of asbestos mines. The enemy of danger from fire exists in the Russian steppes, the Swiss Alps, the rock bound fortresses of Himalaya, the mountains of Silesia, the Saxon lowlands, Norway's Fjords, Spain, Italy, Greece and the islands of the Mediterranean. The world is full of asbestos, and the United States Asbestos trust, with the United Asbestos company of London, controls it all. In 1879 this district produced less than 300 tons of asbestos, worth \$20,-