

CURRENT TOPICS

SENATOR MORGAN, of Alabama, recently called attention to the fact that New York has no representative on the floor of the United States senate. Senator Morgan said: "The smallest state in the union has the same representatives on this floor as the largest state. Rhode Island exercises just the same power and influence as the great Empire state of New York. The two senators from Rhode Island are here and active, but I do not see either of the senators from New York present." Referring to this incident a Washington correspondent says: "Several senators smiled and looked in the direction of the seats assigned to Senators Depew and Platt. Spectators in the galleries also craned their necks over to ascertain if either of the New York senators was in attendance. Neither was there. New York is absolutely without representation on the floor of the senate in these important closing days of the session."

RICHARD JOHN SEDDON, prime minister of New Zealand died recently, aged sixty-one years. Seddon is described as a picturesque and forcible personality. A writer in the Utica (New York) Journal says: "In his own self-governing colony he was easily the greatest political power. He occupied the position of prime minister for fourteen years, representing especially the trades-union element. He was, in fact, the expression of an experimental form of socialism. During the course of his conduct of affairs of New Zealand compulsory arbitration for labor disputes, an eight-hour day, the power to fix wages by the arbitration courts, woman suffrage, government ownership of land, with provision for the gradual purchase of large private holdings, advances to settlers, government life insurance, old age pensions and a number of ideas theoretical elsewhere were put into operation. He began his career in New Zealand as a miner. He developed into a storekeeper with the usual bar attachment. Although a member of the privy council, and a 'right honorable,' he liked to be called 'Dick.' He probably never made a penny out of his office. He was above the suspicion of graft, and died comparatively poor."

WHY THE GOVERNMENT is making such a fuss over the freight rebates secured by the packers on their export shipments, is a puzzle for the New York Evening Post. The Post explains: "It would have been simple enough two years ago, because then the sale of American products to foreigners at a lower price than stay-at-home citizens paid was a reprehensible practice, which no one fell into except occasionally under necessity. But since the country has learned this winter from the speeches of several of the most eminent republicans that 'dumping' our surplus abroad is the rule, and is the best possible thing for home industries, no matter how low prices the foreigner pays, a republican attorney general has not the faintest excuse for interfering with this phase of business. For, if it is a good thing to sell meat or steel rails cheap abroad, it must be a better thing to sell them cheaper still. The greater the reduction in price to the foreigner, the more praiseworthy are the agencies which bring this condition about. If the rebate cuts off another fraction from the price the Frenchman or German pays for his American goods, ought we not, therefore, to encourage the rebate? At home it is different, because we want our countrymen to pay high prices and thereby escape being made 'cheap men.'"

THE KIDNAPING OF the seven-year old son of a wealthy jeweler named Muth created great excitement in Philadelphia a short time ago. The lad was decoyed from school by a man named Kean, who demanded a heavy ransom. Mr. Muth refused to be held up and gave the case into the hands of the police. Within forty-eight hours the police had established the identity of the kidnaper, but could not locate him. Then Superintendent of Police Taylor called the daily newspapers to his aid. He asked the night editors of the papers to meet him at the city hall, and when they appeared he opened up everything—letters, photographs and evidence.

The night editors returned to their offices and set the machinery of their great newspapers to work. They had given their word of honor not to print a line about the case as revealed to them by Mr. Taylor. They were to mislead the kidnaper if possible, for he had threatened to kill the boy if the police closed on him any tighter, and the letter indicated that he meant to make his threat good. The morning papers contained long stories about the kidnaping, but they were what is known in newspaper circles as "hot air." Most of them were to the effect that the police were looking for an Armenian, who was thought to be the guilty man. A few hours later Mr. Muth was called upon to make a sacrifice. The kidnaper had sent another letter declaring that one more move on the part of the police would be fatal to the boy. Superintendent Taylor called on Mr. Muth and said: "You must allow yourself to be put in the position of being a fakir who has deceived the police in this matter in order to cover up something dark in your career." Mr. Muth was "game" to the core, and told the police to blacken his character all they pleased, "but find my boy!" The next day the papers declared that Mr. Muth had confessed that the boy had not been kidnaped, that he was with relatives, and admitted that he had concocted the story of abduction in order to cover up a family secret, the nature of which he would not divulge.

ALL THIS SERVED to make Mr. Muth very unpopular with his neighbors. The police pretended to be disgusted, and with the air of a man thoroughly angry at being "made a monkey of," as he expressed it, Superintendent Taylor issued an order that the police turn their attention to something worth while. Philadelphia laughed at the joke on the police, but roundly denounced Muth for his hoax. All this threw the kidnaper off his guard. He peeped from his hole to get a breath of fresh air, and to his surprise the police nabbed him. The boy was returned to his father, and now that the trick turned by the police and the heroic self-sacrifice of the father are known to the people of Philadelphia, they are busy asking Mr. Muth's pardon and congratulating Superintendent Taylor. But the Philadelphia public should not overlook the part played by the newspaper men. They "threw away" one of the greatest "news stories" of the year to aid the police in restoring a son to his father's arms, and while any one of the night editors could have secured a "beat" by refusing to pledge himself to secrecy, not one of them would violate the unwritten code of ethics that prevails in every office where real newspaper men work.

THE REPUBLICANS of Iowa are engaged in a desperate fight against the railroad ring. The republicans in Pennsylvania are engaged in a desperate fight against a corrupt ring. In Iowa, as in Pennsylvania, republicans point with pride to Mr. Roosevelt as an anti-monopolist, yet the Hawkeye republicans can not for their lives tell whether Mr. Roosevelt is for Cummins or the railroads, while the Keystone republicans are not certain whether Mr. Roosevelt stands for the Penrose people or with the insurgents who are striking for popular government.

THE PHILADELPHIA Public Ledger expresses some curiosity to know where the president stands in the Pennsylvania contest. It insists, however, that Mr. Roosevelt can not stand with the gang in Pennsylvania and justify himself before his British admirers and his American supporters. The Public Ledger says: "The cables from London are at present laden with news of the British horror at political, social, moral and economic conditions in the United States. It seems that Americans on foreign shores are obliged to bow their heads for shame. It is a pretty poor American who can not stand up for his country in any conceivable situation. But that is by the way. The British journals and business men and citizens of all degree, from statesman to London 'cabby' deride

Americans, alleging that the whole body politic is as 'rotten as their meat.' An extract from a dispatch to a very conservative American journal will give an idea of the tenor of the talk: 'Every American who has intimate English friends is constantly asked such questions as: "Is Roosevelt the only honest man in office in the United States?" "Are your local officials all thieves and bribetakers?" "Are your legislators all venal?" "Is patriotism in America all noise and nothing practical?" "Do your people recognize and perform no public duties beyond going to the ballot-box occasionally?" "Why is the administration of justice in America so slow, so uncertain?" "Is it the fault of the laws or their execution?" "Why do you provide intricate legal machinery to enable rich criminals to defer their punishment indefinitely or evade it altogether?"' The London Spectator, a strong journal exceedingly friendly to America, repudiates the suggestion that the British attacks on America are inspired by hostility to the American people, and adds this comment on President Roosevelt: 'It is not too much to say that it is very difficult to find Englishmen or Englishwomen who have not a warm place in their hearts for the president. They feel, too, that he at this moment is engaged in something very like a life and death struggle with the most selfish elements of American commercial life, and that he is fighting for them, as well as for his own fellow citizens, a battle of purity against corruption.'

THE PHILADELPHIA Public Ledger, which in 1896 made such a desperate fight for national honor, is deeply grieved now and it says: "The tenor of practically all the comment is that the American people are overcome by greed; that morals are lacking; that the Americans as a whole are without 'moral stamina,' and that President Roosevelt is engaged in a terrible struggle almost single-handed to lift the sodden people to his own level. This appreciation of the fine qualities, the courage, the enthusiasm and patriotism of the president is just, but perhaps the lumping of the whole American people into one unregenerate mass is a little too sweeping."

FROM BUDA PEST comes the story of a queer state of affairs brought about by the prevailing "code duello." Richard Zombory, a noted sportsman, refused to accept a challenge from a bank clerk whom he had insulted, basing his refusal on the ground of the clerk's "inferior social position." Immediately the bank's officials to the number of 150 took up the cause of the clerk and each one challenged Zombory. This put the sportsman in a bad fix, as the bank officials were, if anything, higher in the social scale than himself. The duel—or duels—did not take place, Zombory making amends. It would be interesting to see M. Zombory putting on his haughty airs in some western mining camp in this country. The suddenness with which he would discover that social position cut no particular amount of "ice" and that the code duello is entirely too slow and easy, would surprise him even more than the concerted action of the Buda Pest bank officials.

IF THE BILL now before the committee in parliament becomes a law, Sunday will be more thoroughly observed throughout Canada than in any other country. Under this bill it is made unlawful to sell anything on Sunday, to transact any business of a person's calling or to employ any other person to do any work, business or labor, except works of necessity, for money. Games and performances of all kinds for which an admission fee is charged are made unlawful. Excursions of every kind, by land or water, on which passengers are carried for amusement, are prohibited. No public park or pleasure ground or amusement place of any kind to which an admission fee is charged can be kept open. No person is allowed to shoot at a target or any other object. Sale of foreign newspapers is prohibited.