

# CURRENT TOPICS

RECENTLY THE Louisville Courier-Journal said: "The quotation in a recent play which was put on in Louisville of the line, 'Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink,' suggests the fact that this is perhaps the most misquoted verse in English poetry. It is taken, of course, from the classic poem of Coleridge, 'The Ancient Mariner.' Correctly quoted, it is 'Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink.' Second place for misquotation honors is said to go to Keats' line, 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever,' usually quoted with an 'and' instead of an 'is.' Another is Milton's phrase, 'Fresh woods and pastures new,' which is frequently rendered, 'Fresh fields and pastures new.'"

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REFERRING TO the Courier-Journal's comment, the Nashville Tennessean says: "Among other lines almost universally misquoted is, 'When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war,' which in its proper form is, 'When Greek joined Greek, then was the tug of war.' The lines are from Lee's tragedy of Alexander. Another that suffers a like fate is, 'Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest,' which should be, 'the going guest.' 'Westward the star of empire takes its way' has become almost classical in its common form from having the sanction of misquotation by the historian Bancroft. Nevertheless, the correct and better phrase is 'the course of empire.' Sometimes popular misquotation is a distinct improvement on the original—as in the oft-quoted line from Sir Walter Raleigh, 'the shallows murmur, but the deeps are dumb.' In the correct version, we have 'shallow' and 'deep' as adjectives instead of the nouns. The correct form is more beautiful and expressive. The common form of a quotation from a play of Beaumont and Fletcher, 'What is one man's poison is another man's meat,' is better, because more epigrammatic than the true phrase: 'What is one man's poison, signor, is another's meat or drink.'"

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PRIOR TO THE election Mr. S. R. Davis wrote to Governor Vardaman's paper, "The Issue," this letter: "Your splendid tribute to the great qualities of Mr. Bryan as a man and a statesman in last week's Issue is alike sincere and just. William Jennings Bryan's place in history is assured, no matter how the campaign of 1908 terminates. If he is elected, we will have an executive with the calm poise of Madison, the serene democratic faith of Jefferson and the courage of Jackson. He will cleanse the Augean stables and cause the dry bones to rattle in the charnel house at Washington where the principles of justice and democracy have been long buried. If defeated, the example of the great commoner will be an inspiration to lovers of liberty the world over, who will keep up the good fight till justice is enthroned and political righteousness is re-established in the hearts of men. If in the providence of God he is defeated his historic figure will inspire his followers to resound the bugle and form the lines again for a renewal of the assault; and it will recall the days of Spanish chivalry, when the Cid, falling on the field of battle, was remounted and strapped to his steed and his corpse led his hosts to final victory."

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THE MONUMENT to the late Benjamin Harrison, formerly president of the United States, was unveiled at Indianapolis October 27. An Associated Press dispatch says: "The ceremonies were preceded by a parade in which all of the Grand Army of the Republic posts of the city, numbering 700 men, participated, as well as 500 members of the regular army, 600 national guard and 500 of fraternal orders. The speakers were Vice President Fairbanks and General John W. Noble, Mr. Harrison's secretary of the interior, and John L. Griffiths, the Harrison biographer. James Whitcomb Riley read a poem written for the occasion. The monument is in University park, facing New York street. Miss Elizabeth Harrison's part in the exercises made the event unusually pretty. Escorted by four members of her father's regiment, the Seventieth Indiana, she walked

from the reviewing stand, on the south side of the street, to the monument opposite. There she pulled the cord that unveiled the figure of her father. The veils were two flags, one representing the army and the other the navy. The cord pulled by the little girl drew the flags from around the figure of the statue. A company from the Tenth regiment saluted with their guns. Then the veterans acting as a guard of honor to the daughter, drew the flags to the tall flagpoles at each side. The pole at the right bore the escutcheon of the army and that at the left the insignia of the navy. This done, the daughter and her escort returned to the reviewing stand. President Roosevelt sent a laurel wreath and cut flowers to be placed at the base of the monument. Following the ceremonies the wreath and flowers were placed on the grave of General Harrison in Crown Hill cemetery."

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THE SPRINGFIELD (Mass.) Republican says: "William R. Hearst read some more Standard Oil letters at political meetings in New York Saturday night. One was from John D. Archbold to Governor William A. Stone, of Pennsylvania, dated December 5, 1902, asking for the appointment to the Pennsylvania supreme court of Judge Morrison, of McKean. Then follows a batch of letters touching John P. Elkin, then attorney general of Pennsylvania, now a judge of the Pennsylvania supreme court. The first (from Archbold to Elkin) incloses a letter of introduction from William Rockefeller to H. McKay Twombly. It is dated September 28, 1899. Another, under date of March 15, 1900, incloses a certificate of deposit to the favor of Elkin for \$5,000, 'in fulfillment of our understanding.' Another, under date of February 5, 1900, incloses a certificate of deposit for \$10,000 in Elkin's favor, 'in accordance with the request in your telegram of today.' What the relations between the Pennsylvania attorney general and Archbold or the Standard Oil company were may possibly be inferred from the following letter from the latter to the former under date of May 9, 1901: 'I inclose copy of a measure pending, I am not sure whether in the house or senate, being an act to amend an existing statute, as stated. For reasons which seem to us potent, we would greatly like to have this proposed amendment killed. Won't you kindly tell me about it and advise me what you think the chances are?' These are sickening disclosures, and in line with what have before come out affecting other public officials."

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IT IS A MISTAKE to believe, says the Pittsburgh Post, that there is not just as good poetry turned out in the United States now as in those far off days. The Post adds: "Twenty years ago some publishing house, we do not recall the name, issued a volume entitled 'The Humbler Poets,' which was a collection of verse from persons unknown, much of it culled from the newspapers. Rarely will be found crowded into one small volume such a meritorious collection. One can scarcely pick up a newspaper today without finding at least one poem that is worthy of preservation. It is the peculiarity of the age that makes poetry so little appreciated. Sentiment exists the same today as it ever has and ever will. Love is the same, nature is the same, and there are many, instead of few, who are able to stir the emotions with their verse. They who weep because this is not an age of poetry are the ones who are constantly wishing for the 'good old days' that exist only in fancy. There are no days so good as these."

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A WRITER in the New York Mail says: "Russia and Turkey, between them, govern most of the world's historic races, administer the cradle lands of most of the world's great religions. Early in the nineteenth century, when Greece and Egypt were still in the Ottoman's grasp, the Turk might claim that nine-tenths of the heritage of the ancient world was in his keeping. He still presides over the countries celebrated in Rawlinson's 'Five Great Monarch-

ies,' over the countries of the 'Arabian Nights,' over the countries where Xenophon marched with the 10,000 and Alexander with the companions; where the Christ began his mission and Mohammed undertook to give it another fulfillment, and where the Crusader led the followers of the one against the followers of the other. More will be heard of these ancient races, as a result of the document that gives them a voice in an imperial parliament. The long silence and paralysis of absolutism will be lifted. That silence has not yet been complete. There had been material, if not political, progress—railroads entering historic lands, development of regions which had not lost their old fertility, discovery of resources, work on new trade routes. Now political self-consciousness will supplement such industrial revival as has appeared."

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ERNEST C. STRAUS, writing from Berlin to the Louisville Courier-Journal, tells this interesting story: "The life of the ordinary Berliner is indeed an interesting one. From the time a child is three weeks old its days are spent in the open air, and the result is the healthy, sturdy specimen. While I do not find the German mother any more attentive to her children than the general run of American mothers, yet the careful way in which the child is kept and nourished in the open naturally makes its vitality the strongest. If circumstances warrant, and a nurse is provided, the mother sees very little of her child. From early morning, when the infant has its bath, until late in the evening, all of its naps are taken in the parks. There are many of these small open places here, and some of them are quite beautiful. There is no 'race suicide' here, particularly among the poor and there are many children. Of course the poorer classes can not afford a hired nurse, yet the little ones have the same good care and advantages, as it seems the duty of older children to take care of and nurse the younger. Early in the morning they start for the playground, where they remain all day. Weather has no terrors for these youngsters. They are practically fed on cold baths. By the time the baby is ten months old he is strong and healthy, with an appetite that can not be satisfied with milk. So to the natural diet are added potatoes, fruits, especially stewed apples, and all kinds of vegetables. Some of the babies can even digest the almost indigestible sauer kraut. This same manner of living continues until the child is perhaps six years of age, with the exception of added diet. Now the child is ready for school. Unless sickly or specially delicate every child is compelled by the government to enter a school at the age of six. The schools are divided into two classes—one for the poor and the other for the more prosperous. To the one for poor—called the 'volkschule'—a child can go absolutely free and receive a fair education, but these schools are attended by the very poorest classes. There is a charge at the other schools, and this is attended by the ordinary and best classes. The cost amounts to quite a bit, all things considered, especially to an American, who comes from the best free schools on earth. The charge for the first year is 125 marks, nearly \$32, and when there are four or five children you can see that this amounts up to a considerable sum. These tuition fees make the schools practically self-supporting. So goes the life of the child for twelve years, each year in turn filled with its own pleasures. Of the playgrounds here much could be said. They are indeed wonderful. There are departments and special amusements for children of all ages, each class or age having its own space set apart. Each park has a number of milk halls or stands, where certified milk is sold to the little ones at a nominal price. Each birth is recorded with the government, and there is a heavy penalty on the parents for failure to report a birth. After the age of twelve the boy begins to arrange for his military service. This is for two years, but students are let off with one year of strenuous army life. Each section of the city is divided into corporations, and each corporation has its defenders. Duelling now be-