

# CURRENT TOPICS

**D**R. JOSE MADRIZ was chosen president of Nicaragua by the unanimous vote of the Nicaraguan congress. Dr. Madriz has been judge of the Central American court and upon his election to the presidency he resigned from the bench. Zelaya, the former president, was given a vote of thanks and it is said that he will exercise strong power under the new administration. The United States government does not look with favor upon Madriz's elevation to the presidency. Secretary Knox has given a statement to the effect that this government's attitude is not changed by the election of Madriz. He says that Madriz will have to show that he is capable of directing a responsible government which is prepared to make reparation for the wrongs which have been done to American citizens in Nicaragua. Estrada, the leader of the revolutionists, has sent to the United States government a message declaring that peace can only be assured by the complete exclusion from Nicaragua of Zelaya and his followers. He has asked that the United States recognize the revolutionary party.

**E**VEN WALTER Wellman is scared. In a Washington dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald, Mr. Wellman says: "What are the people of the great west thinking and saying? What is the attitude of the west toward the present administration and the leaders in congress? What is the west going to do in the coming campaigns and elections? These are the burning questions here at the national capital. Every man who comes from the great heart of the country—the seat of empire—is asked for a report. What has he heard? How do the people feel? The answers are alarming. They show that the republican party as now managed is fast losing the confidence of the people. This is true not of the west alone, but of the whole country. Discontent is everywhere, but it is keenest on the prairies, the western mountain slopes and the Pacific coast."

**T**HE DENVER NEWS gives republicans something to think about when it says: "The News likes Senator LaFollette. But when the good senator raises his pompadour to affirm that if Roosevelt had been in the chair he would have got a tariff revision as was a tariff revision, we are obliged to smile. Likewise to mention some indeterminate thing, such as 'piffle.' Mr. Roosevelt occupied the presidential chair through seven and one-half strenuous years—and didn't do a thing to the tariff. He had every inducement to attack the question. He had spoken against its absurdities when there was no chance that he would be called on to put his words in practice. Nay, more, the circumstances of his coming to the presidency urged him with peculiar force to attempt the revision. The last public utterance of McKinley was a declaration that our tariff policy must be radically changed, and the burdens on our trade greatly reduced. Then McKinley died. Roosevelt came in, vowing that he was going to carry out the McKinley policies. Yet he never even tried to carry out this foremost of McKinley's progressive policies. He left that job for Taft. When a man has had seven and a half years to do a job, and doesn't even start it the while, it strikes us as just a bit silly to prate about what he would have done in eleven years."

**D**R. FREDERICK A. COOK, who a few months ago was hailed as the discoverer of the north pole, is in a bad way so far as his reputation as discoverer is concerned. A Copenhagen cablegram carried by the Associated Press says: "The University of Copenhagen, the first institution of learning to recognize Dr. Frederick A. Cook as the discoverer of the north pole, today solemnly declared that the explorer had failed to establish the claim on which his high honors had been based. The committee appointed by the university to examine Cook's records recently presented its report to the consistory of the university, which reviewed the deductions of the experts with the greatest care

and discussed the findings from every standpoint. That both the committee and the consistory were disappointed was soon known. The consistory met today and adopted a written report to the effect that alleged records submitted for examination by Dr. Cook failed to prove his claim. The report of the committee of which Prof. Stromgren was chairman, as presented to the consistory states that Cook's papers are without any value; that his report to the university is practically the same as that published in the New York Herald on his return from his Arctic expedition. The copies of his notebooks submitted, says the committee, contain no original calculations of observations but only results thereof. Accordingly the committee concludes that he affords no proof of having reached the pole. The university council issued this statement: "The documents handed the university for examination do not contain observations and information which can be regarded as proof that Dr. Cook reached the north pole on his recent expedition." Widespread indignation over the deception which has placed practically the whole of Denmark in a somewhat humiliating position, has taken the place of the hero worship heretofore accorded to Explorer Cook. The members of the examining committee are very angry over the doctor's behavior. Prof. Stromgren, the president of the committee, is furious, and tonight characterized Cook's attempt as 'shameless.'"

**I**T IS REPORTED that Dr. Cook is in Europe and that he is suffering from a nervous breakdown. Even John R. Bradley, the man who financed Dr. Cook's expedition, has lost heart. Speaking to an Associated Press correspondent, Mr. Bradley said: "He has fooled us all, from the king of Denmark down, and he fooled me with the rest. As a matter of fact," continued the sportsman, "I long ago lost all interest in Dr. Cook, the north pole and everything connected with it. Polar bears and the wild life of the Arctic in general are the only things that have ever interested me much in that connection. As for Dr. Cook, I haven't seen him or heard from him since he left the Waldorf-Astoria to go to Bronxville to 'prepare his records' for submission to the University of Copenhagen. I wasn't in communication with him while he was at the Grammatan and as a matter of fact hardly had an hour's solid conversation with him all the while he was here after his return from the Arctic. I discounted this decision from the University of Copenhagen sometime ago. In common with the rest of the world I was delighted with the first news from Dr. Cook that he had discovered the pole. His actions, however, and his failure to make more than the meager statements regarding his trip which early followed his return to civilization took some of the smack off the supposed triumph. I began to weaken decidedly when Dr. Cook left us all without so much as a word of good-bye. When a man runs away you can't expect his friends to fight for him and Cook's fight—for that's what it seemed to me to amount to—killed all my interest in him and his affairs. Before that I had never had reason to doubt Cook and his whole course in this matter seems inexplicable to me. I am sick of the whole blooming polar business and I don't want to hear anything more about the north pole or any of its attributes," was the characteristic way in which Mr. Bradley summed up his attitude.

**R**EAR ADMIRAL W. S. Schley has issued a public statement in which, while reaffirming his confidence in Dr. Cook as the north pole explorer, he calls upon Commander Peary to submit his proofs to some scientific body other than the National Geographical Society. Admiral Schley thinks that the same body which examined Cook's testimony should be permitted to pass on Peary's data. He adds: "The Danes are the best posted body of men in the world on Arctic matters. The consistory of the University of Copenhagen should be given the opportunity to examine the Peary proofs, for in that

way they would be submitted to the same test that was applied to those of Cook. The consistory which was regarded by the civilized world as more than friendly to Dr. Cook showed by its action in turning down the explorer that it holds the scales of justice, as it sees them, even and honestly."

**T**HE ASSOCIATED Press report of Admiral Schley's interview says: "Moreover Admiral Schley believes that the submission of the proofs to Copenhagen should be insisted upon by Peary, despite whatever the National Geographic Society's attitude may be. It is suggested to the officer that the society some time ago officially declared its intention to let scientific bodies of reputable standing examine and test the Peary proofs when they had been passed upon by the society. But the organization has not done it," he retorted quickly. "So far there has been shown no disposition to carry out its avowed intentions, has there?" Admiral Schley declined to say on what grounds he took exception to the finding of scientists of the University of Copenhagen that Cook had not been at the north pole. He merely re-affirmed his belief in the explorer, adding that he believed Peary, too, had gained the top of the earth. The importance of the admiral's demand is increased by the fact that he has had wide experience in the far north. In 1884 he was in command of the Thetis expedition, which resulted in the rescue of Lieutenant Greeley and the men who had been cast away at Cape Sabin, and whom the civilized world had practically given up for lost. For his rescue Schley, then a captain in the service, was awarded a gold watch, and a vote of thanks by the Maryland legislature and a medal of honor by the Massachusetts humane society. Members of the National Geographic Society declined to discuss the suggestion of the retired naval officer. The society is still smarting under the somewhat curt reply made by the University of Copenhagen to its request that a committee representing the society be permitted to be present when Dr. Cook's data was examined. While recognizing the complete right of the Danish scientists to decline such a request, yet American savants feel that the Danes were needlessly brusque in their declination."

**U**NITED STATES Senator A. J. McLaurin died suddenly at his home in Brandon, Miss. A Jackson, Miss., dispatch carried by the Associated Press says: "When the fatal stroke came upon him, Senator McLaurin was seated in a rocking chair in front of the fire in his library. He suddenly fell forward, without speaking a word, and life was extinct when members of his family reached his side. The swift summons of death followed within a few moments of a remark by Mr. McLaurin that he was then feeling better than he had felt at any time since his recent severe illness, resulting from an attack of ptomaine poisoning. Governor Noel stated that he would not announce for some days as to whether he would appoint a successor to Senator McLaurin or refer the selection to the legislature, which will convene in regular session early next month. Should he make the selection, however, he stated that the names of Congressman Byrd, Bowers and Chandler and several others would be considered in connection with the appointment."

**P**RESIDENT TAFT seems at last to be convinced there is "an anti-Taft conspiracy." In an editorial the Lincoln (Neb.) Journal (rep.) says: "In connection with yesterday's accounts of the preparations for the investigation of Secretary Ballinger comes this statement: 'Men who are in position to know the sentiments of Mr. Taft declared tonight that he has at last become convinced of the truth of what his friends have been telling him for many weeks, of what he has hitherto laughed at—that there lies behind the attack on Mr. Ballinger a more or less definitely organized movement to discredit the Taft administration.' This refers to the alleged 'return from Elba,' movement, a sup-