

# CURRENT TOPICS

FREDERICK TOWNSEND MARTIN, a New York millionaire, who has devoted his life to his fellows has written for the New York American the following New Year's message: Earth rolls ever onward from darkness to light toward the glorious sun, perpetually vitalized by its bright rays. Mankind moves ever forward, rises ever upward, from ignorance to enlightenment, from chaos to order; from brutalizing competition to humanizing co-operation; from slavery to liberty; from selfishness to brotherhood. Already have we gone far, learned much, risen high—but there is still in the world too much hate, too much strife; too little peace, too little love; too much sorrow, not enough joy. Man is destined to be a brother—free, loving, happy. So it is that in our flight through time we sigh on and pine and pine, seldom knowing what the soul craves; only that it needs something. Our yearnings are yearnings for liberty; our sighings are sighings for happiness; our need is brotherhood. We have yet too far to roll to reach that sublime goal; but already has that hope taken firm root, and as the world soars on the wings of time, revolving and evolving, that hope is budding and bursting into blossom. Let all rejoice! The New Year brings us nearer to the day when men's lives will blend harmoniously in infinite brotherhood. Oh, for the dawning of that day! Then our senses will remain unworn and tender; the whole man awake in every part of everyone; life a source of ceaseless joy, stirring and dancing blood. Then shall we hear and obey nature's every holy call, and with a thousand songs share in her divinely joyous feast.

IN connection with the deportation of Castro, former president of Venezuela, a writer in the "Weekly People," published in New York, says: About thirty and odd years ago, when General Baez, the deposed president of the Dominican republic, landed in this city he was promptly met with a law suit for damages by an American citizen who claimed he was outraged in Santo Domingo by the general during his incumbency as president. The case for the ex-president was argued by William M. Evarts. The argument was simple, terse, cogent. The acts of an official in his official capacity are reviewable only in the courts therefor provided by the country's constitution. If the other courts in the official's country have no jurisdiction over his official acts, much less so courts abroad. The point was enforced with numerous citations from international law, backed by a mass of precedents, and of argument illustrative of the absurd untenableness of the opposite, the view of the plaintiff in the case. The court so held. The case against ex-President Baez was dismissed. Why, upon what principle of law—civil, international, or criminal—can Cipriano Castro, the ex-president of Venezuela, be refused admission to the United States upon his arrival on the Touraine and ordered deported back to France, as Washington dispatches say had been determined on in Washington? The allegation of Washington dispatches to the effect that Castro "is a great criminal, guilty of offenses against the law of Venezuela"—that allegation, if it smites Castro at all, smites the Washington administration with double force. Castro has for four years been endeavoring to re-enter his own country—a curious endeavor for an alleged "fugitive from justice"—and it is the Washington administration most prominently that has blocked Castro's path homeward. If, however, Castro guilty of crimes committed in Venezuela, in his official capacity, then, the unbroken line of precedents in international law unlock this nation's gate to him, and bid the Washington administration to keep hands off. Napoleon was a prisoner of war. While Great Britain refused him admission to her soil, she did not inconsistently set him adrift, but deported him and held him caged in her own island of St. Helena. What then is Castro's real offense that it can drive the administration at Washington to defy precedent, law, common-sense and justice alike? The "offense" is, indeed, of prime magnitude. When the now discredited and disgraced "Acting Secretary of State" Loomis was the minister of the United States at Caracas, and used his office for com-

mercial chicaneries of the Bermudez Asphalt company, even to the point of securing an "ultimatum" from his home government against Venezuela—at that critical juncture what President Castro did was to manage to get possession of an autograph receipt by Loomis of a round sum of money from the Bermudez company; cause the same to be photographed; and cause copies of the photograph to be furnished to all the members of the diplomatic corps in Caracas. At home, in Venezuela, Castro's master stroke knocked the bottom from under the "ultimatum," and cleared the atmosphere; abroad, throughout the civilized world, the stroke exposed the Washington administration as being in the hands of cliques of commercial adventurers, a disreputable pack of political pirates, unworthy to represent a great nation. Small wonder that the Taft administration, which, in its South American policy, continued the "Roosevelt policies," should be so blindly enraged against Castro as now to fly off the handle of law, of sense, and of international propriety.

THE harvester trust has authorized Prof. Perry G. Holden, to spend one million dollars to "advance the cause of agriculture." Referring to this enterprise La Follette's Magazine says: The fact is, of course, that the harvester trust is spending that million in order that it may get back more millions from the farmer. Clarence Funk, general manager of the International Harvester company, says: "We expect this work to be of great aid to the farmers under Professor Holden's direction. This isn't exactly philanthropy, because we expect to sell more agricultural implements as a result, but we are not looking immediately for profits. We believe that as part of the community we owe it something in the way of educating it in the direction of greater productiveness." The idea is for Professor Holden to educate the farmers into growing bigger crops of corn. That will result in more acres planted and therefore the sale of more plows and harrows and cultivators, and corn cutters and shredders and shellers.

THE women members of the Colorado legislature are attracting considerable attention. The Denver News says: The woman legislator has not ceased to be an object of interest, even curiosity, in Colorado. The woman senator is a novelty and a sensation combined. The visitors who adorned the galleries at the statehouse first peered down into the seething turmoil that represented the house of representatives before that body was called to order. There were two women there, without hats. They sat side by side for company, and, like queens, received the congratulations of fellow representatives upon being there and for conferring such distinguished honor upon that body. The women in the galleries craned their necks and almost applauded when Mrs. Frances S. Lee of Denver said "present" instead of "here," as all the men said when their names were called on the roll. Mrs. Agnes L. Riddle, a veteran of the legislature by reason of her service in the Eighteenth assembly, a farmer and a witty debater, took all the homage with the superb unconcern of long experience. The two women took no part in the proceedings other than to register their votes whenever the roll was called, and to pose for every newspaper photographer that looked through the door of the house chamber. But in the senate the presence of the first woman senator of Colorado caused excitement and curiosity, even among the senators themselves. Upon every possible occasion the solons turned toward the desk where sat Mrs. Helen Ring Robinson, and they bowed profoundly and with eloquence as they addressed her as Mrs. Senator Robinson, to distinguish her from Senator W. C. Robinson of El Paso, as well as to advance "senatorial courtesy" a further peg as the last word in politeness. Mrs. Senator Robinson had a bunch of violets on her desk and a bevy of fluttering women about her, who congratulated her and the women of Colorado upon the political innovation. Mrs. Senator Robinson was placed in the front row of senators, to the right of the center aisle. Mrs. Dora Phelps Buell, Mrs. Louise Tyler, Ellis Meredith, Mrs. E. P.

McGovern, Miss Hattie Westover and other prominent women in the democratic party called upon the new senator at her desk. Secretly buried in their senatorial hearts, a few inveterate smokers were troubled and anguished with the fear that perhaps they could never, never again smoke in the senate, because a woman and senatorial courtesy had been combined. One senator who does not smoke, seeing several of the "victims" draw cigars from their pockets, glance at Mrs. Senator and mournfully put them back again, suggested, with malicious intent, that a resolution prohibiting smoking should be passed. But the woman senator brought joy and relief to the smokers and made herself so popular that she could have had the president pro tem job for the asking, when she said that she would not have the sacred custom broken—no, she rather liked the smell of a GOOD cigar. Which was a gentle hint that no oakum can be burned in the senate.

A REMINDER of an old-time crime is given in a Boston, Mass., dispatch, as follows: Jesse Pomeroy, whose crimes startled the country nearly forty years ago, attempted unsuccessfully to escape from the state prison at Charlestown. Pomeroy is serving a life sentence for torturing two children to death when he was thirteen years old. The convict left his cell by sawing three bars from the door. The mewling of a cat, which followed Pomeroy along the corridor, attracted the attention of Thomas Brassell, an attendant, shortly before daylight, and when he ordered the murderer to throw up his hands the prisoner made no resistance. Pomeroy had made careful plans to escape. A dummy had been arranged in his bed, so that the officer on duty would not notice his absence. The steel bars of the cell door were cut by a saw made out of two small pieces of steel. The prison officials have not learned how the murderer obtained them. Pomeroy was sentenced to be hanged in 1874, for the brutal murder of a small girl and boy, Katie Curren and H. H. Millon, in South Boston. The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in solitary confinement. The convict has attempted twice before to escape. Aided by his mother, he had petitioned every governor of the state for thirty years to grant him a pardon. Pomeroy is fifty-three years old.

WITH the inauguration of Governor Wilson, the old dominion will have had eight of the country's presidents of the United States. A writer in the Kansas City Star says: It is more than sixty years since Virginia has had the opportunity to welcome home one of her native sons as president of the United States. Taylor, inaugurated in 1849, was the last Virginian until Wilson to hold the highest office in the nation's gift. In the early days of the republic, however, Virginia earned its title of "mother of Presidents" by the long succession of the "Virginia dynasty." Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Harrison, Tyler and Taylor, all were Virginia-born. Ohio ranks next, with six presidents to its credit—Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Harrison, McKinley and Taft. North Carolina and New York furnished three each. Jackson, Polk and Johnson were born in the tar heel state; Van Buren, Fillmore and Roosevelt in New York. Massachusetts produced two presidents, the Adamses, father and son. New Hampshire is credited with Pierce, Pennsylvania with Buchanan, Kentucky with Lincoln, Vermont with Arthur and New Jersey with Cleveland.

SPEAKING to a gathering of woman suffragists, Governor Sulzer said: "As a matter of political justice I have always favored equal suffrage for men and women and have recommended in my message that the legislature pass as soon as possible a woman suffrage amendment to the constitution of the state of New York. You ladies deserve commendation for your enthusiasm for a great cause that ought to be respected by everybody and receive the consideration it merits. I congratulate you on the successful outcome of your pilgrimage and assure you that in the future as in the past, all I can do for your cause will be done."