

# CURRENT TOPICS

ACCORDING to the treasurer of the United States, the world's stock of gold amounts to \$5,500,000,000. Of this sum this country holds one-fifth, or \$1,342,000,000. The treasury has \$700,000,000 of this sum. In 1896 the world's stock of gold was approximately \$4,280,000,000, of which we held less than one-seventh, or about \$599,000,000. In the summer of 1896 the federal treasury held \$150,000,000. Of the world's total annual production of \$300,000,000 the United States produces \$80,000,000.

AN INTERESTING story, of which a dog is the hero, is told by the Geneva correspondent for the New York American, thus: "After escaping in their night clothes from a house on fire in St. Sephorin, Canton Vaud, a family of the name of Pargier discovered that Henri, a boy of four, had been forgotten. It was impossible for a human being to enter the house, which was enveloped in thick smoke. The father made two attempts, but failed, and then remembered his dog, a beautiful collie. "Go and fetch Henri," he said, pointing to the house. The dog immediately rushed up the stairs, but returned terribly burned. A second and a third time the animal entered the house, and was then seen dragging out the child, whose clothes were afire. The boy was unconscious, but is expected to recover. Immediately the lad was safe, the dog rushed off to the woods, howling with pain. Its coat was burned off, and M. Pargier, borrowing a gun, followed it and put it out of its misery.

WHILE visiting relatives in Paterson, N. J., recently, Master at Arms Charles E. Newton of the cruiser Des Moines received a letter which the government has been trying to deliver him for the last three years. The story is told by the Paterson correspondent for the New York American in this way: "The letter was mailed in New York by relatives of Mr. Newton, and was addressed to the Brooklyn Navy yard, where the Des Moines was awaiting orders. Before the letter could be delivered the Des Moines was ordered to Norfolk, Va., and it was forwarded there. In the meantime Newton's ship had gone to Cuba, but the letter did not reach the new republic's shores until the Des Moines had been sent on a cruise, but when the letter reached China Newton and his ship had gone away, and the letter was again started off—this time for England. The Des Moines did not stop on English shores and the postal officials of that country returned the letter to the United States postal station at Shanghai, China, whence it was again sent to the Philippines. Back it went to Norfolk, Va., just missing the Des Moines by a day or two. Then it was forwarded to Paterson, and was finally delivered."

THE statement that the beef trust is for Roosevelt and that some of its officers have made large contributions to the republican campaign fund will not create general surprise. It is interesting, however, to learn that, speaking to a New York World correspondent at Chicago, J. Ogden Armour said: "We are going to support Roosevelt most emphatically. We have been satisfied with his administration, and will be well satisfied to have him continue in office. I am sorry that I can't agree with The World that Parker is the better man for the position." "Then President Roosevelt's position in regard to the trust question has not influenced you against him?" The World correspondent asked. "One would naturally suppose"—began Mr. Armour, but the sentence was never finished. Mr. Armour continued—"Anyhow, I think he is the best man for the country. I like a man of decided views, even if they aren't always in our favor. We can be pretty certain what he is going to do, and that means everything to a business man."

THE state of Massachusetts has apologized to Great Britain for the action of Police Judge Fuelps in fining Mr. Gurney, third secretary of the British embassy, and the apology has been accepted. Newspaper correspondents now say that Mr. Gurney was not managing the auto at the time of his arrest for violating the speed ordinance. The machine was managed by a young

New Yorker and Mr. Gurney shielded him and assumed all responsibility.

AN INTERESTING question has arisen with respect to the deportation of a Chinaman. A dispatch to the Kansas City Journal, under date of Ogdenburg, N. Y., Oct. 23, says: "United States Commissioner Gray today ordered the deportation of Wong Bing, a Chinaman, unlawfully residing in this country, it is alleged. Wong Bing conducted a store at Brockville, Ont., for many years and is, it is said, a naturalized British subject. Representations were made to the commissioner that the Dominion government would permit Wong Bing to re-enter Canada on his certificate, but the commissioner finds no authority for deporting Chinamen to Canada and rules that he must go back to China. Appeal will be taken on the point of the Chinaman's British citizenship."

PRESIDENT Guy Potter Benton of Miami University, in a speech delivered to the students on Oct. 3, expressed opposition to foot ball. "I recognize the fact," he said, "that one college could not act alone. It would be dubbed a sissy institution. I should like to see the presidents of all the colleges get together to abolish the football business. 'I favor athletics, and want the boys to have a good time, but football is too hazardous to be justifiable college sport'. President Benton's remarks, it is said, were prompted by the injury of several Miami players at Columbus Saturday.

GEORGE MEREDITH proposes a 10-year marriage contract and the Princess Charlotte of Saxe-Meiningen, sister of the German emperor, has written a pamphlet advocating it as a remedy for social ills. She thinks that divorce is the result of boredom, and that if a man were allowed the society of several wives at once he would not be driven to a succession of exchanges.

COMMENTING upon this statement, the New York Sun says: "But how about the women? The records of our divorce courts show that they seek relief from boredom in a change of partners more often than men. If they are not satisfied with a whole husband apiece, how would they get along with a fraction? Would the princess be prepared to follow logic to the extent of giving them the privilege of polyandry? Perhaps she might answer that in the royal caste of Europe both polygamy and polyandry are already permissible through the convenient institution of morganatic marriage."

RECENTLY the Pall Mall Gazette, referring to railroad accidents in the United States, said: "They are far too common in America, especially of late. The fact that it is a large country with plenty of room for them to happen in is not sufficient to explain them. Probably the fundamental cause is the hasty and imperfect construction of the lines, the make-shift arrangements for saving time and the general rush of strenuous national life."

THIS statement prompted a writer in the New York World to compile some interesting figures. These figures include only persons killed, or injured in actual accidents, not the enormously larger number who are killed or injured each year getting on and off the trains or working about them under normal conditions:

	Killed.	Injured.
Last quarter of 1903.....	446	3,178
January, 1904 .....	56	243
February .....	72	209
March .....	51	38
April .....	77	169
May .....	29	140
June .....	43	187
July .....	101	413
August .....	127	273
September (approximated) .....	120	350

Total ..... 1,122 5,260  
The last quarter of 1903 was the most prolific of disaster in the annals of railroading, and the number of passengers killed was three times as great as in any similar period previously.

THE appalling disasters of the last twelve months are as follows:

	K.	I.
Oct. 17—Lambertville, N. J.....	17	35
Oct. 31—Indianapolis, Ind .....	1	20
Nov. 14—Kentwood, La.....	32	33
Nov. 19—Tremont, Ill.....	16	70
Dec. 21—Godfrey, Kan.....	10	32
Dec. 23—Laurel Run, Pa.....	65	4
Dec. 26—East Paris, Mich.....	18	57
Jan. 6—Wilard, Kan.....	10	49
Feb. 20—Jackson, Utah.....	24	13
March 5—Hammondsville, O.....	6	4
March 8—Kewanee, Miss.....	6	4
April 7—Maywood, Ill.....	3	23
April 30—Kimswick, Mo.....	8	15
July 2—Tony, Wis.....	3	16
July 3—Litchfield, Ill.....	24	45
July 5—Cameron, Mo.....	3	60
July 10—Midvale, N. J.....	16	69
July 13—Glenwood, Ill.....	18	25
Aug. 7—Eden, Col.....	94	3
Aug. 8—Spottsville, Ky.....	4	0
Aug. 9—Chicago, Ill.....	5	7
Sept. 6—Pendleton, Mo.....	7	30
Sept. 10—Portsmouth, Va.....	4	17
Sept. 24—Newmarket, Tenn .....	63	150
Sept. 26—Peoria, Ill.....	4	12
Sept. 26—Lewiston, Me .....	3	29

THE seven great wrecks of American history are as follows:

Year.	Locality.	Killed.
1856.....	Camp Hill, Pa.....	66
1870.....	Ashtabula, O.....	89
1887.....	Chatsworth, Ill.....	85
1888.....	Mud Run, Pa.....	66
1903.....	Laurel Run, Pa.....	65
1904.....	Eden, Col.....	94
1904.....	Newmarket, Tenn.....	63

S. C. Dunham, president of an accident insurance company, in a recent lecture at Yale, gave the following figures showing the relative danger of railroad travel. They seem to indicate that the railroads are not after all doing so much to decimate the population as some other classes of accident-producers:

	Per cent.
Accidents to pedestrians.....	24.14
At home (indoor).....	18.80
Horses and vehicles.....	18.16
At home (outdoors).....	15.98
Recreation .....	6.15
Railroad travel .....	4.77
Bicycle accidents .....	4.06
Street-car travel .....	2.74
Use of firearms .....	1.73
Animal bites .....	1.52
Assaults .....	1.20
Steamship travel .....	.70
Miscellaneous .....	.05
Total .....	100.00

WHAT is probably the most ancient letter in the world, has, according to the New York World, just been discovered in some excavations being made in the Province of Attica, and M. Wilhelm, secretary of the Austrian archaeological institute here, who has succeeded in deciphering it, asserts that it was written four centuries before Christ. It is engraved on a leaden leaf, folded in two, and it bears on the outside the following address: "To the porter of the market at Potis, to be delivered either to Nausias or to Thrasicles, or to their sons." The text of the letter is as follows: "Mnesiengos sends his greetings to those in the house and informs them that he is in good health. Please send me a blanket or some sheepskins, if possible of the ordinary kind, without ornaments. As soon as the occasion offers I shall return them."

DR. C. H. FISCHER, in charge of the medical and surgical service of the Wabash railway hospital in New York, recently performed the unusual feat of operating upon himself. The Cumberland correspondent for the Cincinnati Enquirer tells the story in this way: "For nearly a week Dr. Fisher has been suffering a violent infection of the left foot, and last night it became alarming. He immediately arranged to go to Washington for surgical attention, but was prevented by an accident to one of the Wabash men. Seeing