

CURRENT TOPICS IN AMERICA.

(By letter dated November 8th, from our New York correspondent.)

SENIOR OFFICER'S RIDING TEST.

It was reported some time ago that President Roosevelt had issued a riding order, whereby army officers from the rank of Major to Colonel had to take long rides in order to show whether they were fit for active service or not. The President's object in issuing this order was to rejuvenate the corps of officers. The order has already born fruit in this direction. Before any officer undertook this long ride, he had to undergo medical inspection in order to ascertain whether he was physically in a position to bear the ride without endangering his health. The President's order accordingly submitted the physical efficiency of the officers to a double test. The medical inspection has already occasioned the retirement of 12 officers, for whom the army doctors considered the intended test of endurance dangerous. These officers must now appear before a commission in order to have their general efficiency enquired into. The President's order has awakened in army circles partly amusement, partly anxiety.

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The latter is chiefly felt by those officers who for years have led a kind of contemplative existence in the offices of the War Department, far removed from active service. Out of 150 officers examined the above-mentioned 12 were put back, i. e. about ten per cent of those examined. Should this percentage be kept up among the 700 officers still awaiting examination, about 70 of the officers who have reached the rank in question would be found inefficient.

The riding test consisted in traversing a distance of 15 English miles at full gallop. One participant in the ride, Lieut. Colonel Walker, Commandant of the Coast Defence works near Boston, has died from heart weakness. It is generally assumed that his death was hastened by the ride, and the army doctors are being reproached for having allowed him to take part in the ride and for not having recognized that he had already suffered from a weak heart for six years.

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THE DECREASED BIRTH RATE.

There is much lamentation in America over the decrease per cent in the birth rate. This phenomenon is summed up in the significant words "race suicide". One of the mightiest opponents of race-suicide is President Roosevelt himself, who has repeatedly condemned it severely in public and has pointed out its serious consequences for the country. In fact he considers the father of a family a far better citizen than the bachelor, and he describes as the noblest of all women those who, in accordance with old customs, carry out the real duties of women in the kitchen and nursery, while condemning in the sharpest way those who will not bear of the blessings of children by reason of their social obligations. A whole number of cases are related, in which the President has kissed little children and give expression to his great pleasure when he has made the acquaintance of a mother of many children. Race suicide is now to be defeated with the help of the ever powerful Mammon. The President's ideas as to race-suicide has just called into life an association which has written upon its banner "The North American parents' benevolent institution". To each member of this association 500 dollars in money will be paid upon the birth of a child. The Association is, however, cautious, as it announces that twins and triplets will be regarded as one child. The entrance fee is fixed at 5 dollars and the annual subscription of members at 1 dollar. The Association sees before it a gigantic field for successful activity since there are today in the United States about 14 million married couples.

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NO ROOSEVELT REACTION.

Last Tuesday elections for Governor took place in six States, and in nearly all States of the Union, municipal and other local elections. These "off-year" elections, as a general rule, excite no very great interest on account of their local character,

and it is only when they occur in the year which precedes the Presidential election that importance above the ordinary attaches to them, because an idea is prevalent that from the result of these elections conclusions may commonly be drawn as to the political feeling of the people with respect to the Presidential election. Curiously enough this year's elections also failed to arouse much interest, that is, from a general point of view. The results, however, were very interesting. In most cases they depended upon purely local questions, but indirectly they dealt with the financial confusion and the Trust policy of President Roosevelt. The President's opponents dreamed that the efforts to fasten the responsibility of the financial disturbance on the President on account of his Trust policy, would occasion a reaction and a Democrat avalanche—a decisive Democrat victory—at the polling booths. The issue of the elections, however, may be searched in vain for any signs of a Roosevelt reaction—a condemnation of the Trust policy. In the so-called "off-year" the Democrats have invariably been able to show some successes; this was also the case in Tuesday's elections. There was, however, a lack of symptomatic Democrat successes which might have justified the conclusion that the Republican party had lost influence, that the President's popularity was waning. On the contrary, even the *New York World*, which unceasingly and bitterly attacks the President on account of his drastic Trust policy, unreservedly confirms this fact. The bitter feelings of the New York financial world, whose members for the most part live in small towns in New Jersey, are not reflected in the results of the elections in this State. On the contrary, the Republican victory in this State shows an increased majority; the Democrat candidate for the Governorship, Mr. Katzenbach, seemed at first to have the best chance of being elected. The battle at the polls was chiefly concerned with "prohibition", which the Republicans have in-

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roduced into the State, whereby the sale of alcoholic drinks on Sundays is strictly prohibited in New Jersey. Mr. Katzenbach appeared to have at his back the whole liberal-thinking element in the State, who desire to see the repeal of the State prohibition law as they regard the same as an attack on individual free-will. None the less the opposition Republican candidate was successful. The Democrats are attempting to represent the issue of the mayoral election in Cleveland, where the late Democrat mayor was re-elected, as important and characteristic, since the Republican candidate for the Mayoralty, the ex-member of Congress Mr. Burton, had the endorsement of President Roosevelt. The Democrats profess to see in Mr. Burton's defeat a blow against the President. But here, too, the result is simply due to local questions, and the President himself has described the result of the election as extremely satisfactory from a Republican point of view.

Tammany Hall's victory in New York has similarly no importance from a national political standpoint. The result of the elections there, is, however, important in so far as it shows another fiasco of the Independence League of the newspaper proprietor Hearst, so bitterly attacked for his political methods, who, on this occasion, attempted some petty political haggling with the Republicans in Manhattan County. The issue of the election shows condemnation of this haggling, and Hearst's political prestige has once more suffered a severe blow thereby.

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Nebraska, Mr. Burton's native State has given the Republicans increased majorities. Kentucky, formerly a Democrat State, is once more Republican. From a national political point therefore the issue of the elections is extremely interesting and significant, even if the comparatively small number of votes polled shows that the generality of electors attach no particular importance to the elections. This fact may, however, be regarded as perhaps the most significant in the whole election; it may be taken as proof that the mass of the electors have no wish to alter anything in existing political circumstances but are completely contented with them and also with the President.

CHURCH SERVICES: DRESDEN.

ALL SAINTS' (ENGLISH) CHURCH, Wiener Strasse.
Friday, November 29th. 11.0 a.m. Matins and Litany. 5.0 p.m. Choir Practice.
Saturday, November 30th. *S. Andrew, Ap. and M.* 8.0 a.m. Holy Communion. 10.0 a.m. Matins.
Sunday, December 1st. *Advent Sunday.* 8.0 a.m. and 12.0 m.d. (Choral) Holy Communion. 11.0 a.m. Matins and Sermon. 6.0 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.
Monday, December 2nd. 10.0 a.m. Matins.
Tuesday, December 3rd. 10.0 a.m. Matins.—Ladies' Work Society Sale of Work: Hotel Bristol. 11.0 to 1 and 3.0 to 7.0 o'clock.
Wednesday, December 4th. 11.0 a.m. Matins and Litany.
Thursday, December 5th. 8.0 a.m. Holy Communion.
Friday, December 6th. 10.15 a.m. Holy Communion. 11.0 a.m. Matins and Litany. 5.0 p.m. Choir Practice.
Saturday, December 7th. 10.0 a.m. Matins.
Chaplain: The Rev. C. A. Moore, M. A., B. C. L., Hon. assistant Chaplain: The Rev. M. S. Farmer, M. A.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, Reichs Platz 5, at the head of Reichs Strasse.
Friday, November 29th. Litany 10.0 a.m. Woman's Auxiliary 10.30 a.m.
Sunday, December 1st. Holy Communion 8.0 a.m. Sunday School 10.0 a.m. Holy Communion and Sermon 11.0 a.m. Afternoon Service and address 5.30 p.m.
Friday, December 6th. Litany 10.0 a.m. Junior Auxiliary 3.0 p.m.
The Rev. J. F. Butterworth, M. A., Rector.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Bernhard Strasse 2, at corner of Bernhard and Winkelmann Strasse.
Services every Sunday at 11.0 a.m. Communion on the first Sunday of the month.
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DRESDEN: LOCAL.

THANKSGIVING RECEPTION AT THE AMERICAN CONSULATE-GENERAL.

Yesterday afternoon the American Consul-General and Mrs. T. St. John Gaffney held a reception, on the occasion of Thanksgiving Day to members of the American Colony and compatriots passing through Dresden. A large number of guests enjoyed the hospitality of the popular Consul-General and his charming wife. An extremely interesting and carefully selected musical programme contributed to the enjoyment of the reception. Among those present we noticed the following: Vice Consul-General and Mrs. Alfred C. Johnson and Miss Johnson, Dr. R. Grimshaw, Rev. F. Ward Denys and Mrs. Denys, Mr. and Miss Rodewald, General and Mrs. John Mc Ewan Hyde, Mr. David R. Mc Kee, Deputy Consul-General and Mrs. Ulysses J. Bywater, Mrs. D. P. Coolidge and Miss Coolidge, Mrs. H. L. Edwards and Miss Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Felix Berthold, Mrs. F. Grosvenor, Mrs. A. S. Trigg and Mrs. Geo. P. Trigg, Mrs. J. T. Lawrence, Mrs. A. H. Hubbard, Miss Lillie M. Smith, Mrs. F. E. Rogers and Miss Rogers, Mrs. Howard Smith, Mrs. Adam Grant, Miss Louise Williams, Miss Gjersten, Miss Lundsgaard, Mr. D. Lockwood, Dr. W. A. Spring and Mrs. Spring, Mrs. B. F. Norris, Mrs. Milo Dodds and Miss Dodds, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Williams, Mrs. J. M. Poland, Mr. H. M. Field, Miss Breed, Miss E. Luthringer, Mrs. F. L. Wagar, and Miss Swoyer.

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Among the Choirs of male voices in Dresden the Liedertafel takes quite a first place, thanks in large measure to the distinguished leadership of Herr Karl Pembaur, but also in an equal degree to the musical intelligence and artistic zeal so satisfactorily evinced by the members. A wealth of good tenor voices is one marked characteristic of this Choir at present, and as in the other parts select and high-class material predominates, it was no matter of surprise that the concert which was given by the Society at the Gewerbehause on Wednesday evening greatly delighted the very numerous audience. It is true that the only pieces of artistic value were the finely harmonized and modulated choral compositions: "Im Gärtchen vor dem Tore" of Karl Pembaur, and two beautiful works by the gifted Munich composer Ludwig Thuille, lately deceased. But the performance of Friedrich Hegar's "Gewitternacht", which loses itself in externals, and of the folk-songs freely arranged by Mathieu Neumann, was not only full of charm but intrinsically and highly artistic. And to that performance a brilliant *folie* was added by revelations of genius on the part of the Dutch concert-singer Fräulein Tilly Koenen. No matter what she sings—whether Brahms, Robert Franz, Hugo Wolf, or Richard Strauss—she always hits the style with the intuition of true genius; while the glowing tones of her wonderful alto voice, perfectly cultivated as it is in all the registers, and the soulful expression that she threw into them,