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EDITORIAL

The man on horseback.

There was deep political insight in that legend which the cartoonist of the New York Herald inscribed under his cartoon on President Roosevelt's message: "I am the state (or 25,000 words to that effect)."

Murder by law.

Last week a young woman of twenty-two was hanged in Vermont. The story of her execution is a horrible thing to read. Yet we invoke no sympathy for her.

She may have deserved the shocking penalty she suffered. But we do invoke the self-condemnation of every man who was in any wise responsible for killing her. The evil of the death penalty is not so much in the mental and physical suffering of its victims as in the moral degradation it imposes upon those who inflict it. Murder, be it legal or illegal, is always worse for the murderer than it is for the murdered.

Corrupt campaign contributions.

Senator Tillman, inspired by the disclosures at the New York insurance investigations, has stuck his pitchfork into the national banks. He wants to know about their campaign contributions. We may now be able to compare national with State investigations of this species of corruption. That the national banks contributed liberally along with the insurance companies to the Hanna-McKinley-Cortelyou-Roosevelt campaign corruption funds is pretty well known in an open-secret sort of way, and that it is the business of the Treasury Department to inform itself of these embezzlements is plain. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether the Treasury Department will expose or conceal.

The British cabinet.

Campbell-Bannerman has organized a strong ministry with distinctly radical leanings. Besides being a free trade ministry and hostile to the use of educational funds for sectarian purposes, it is clearly in harmony with the Prime Minister on the question of land value taxation. The lines are well-drawn, therefore, for a contest before the people at the approaching general elections on the three burning issues—the educational question, the tariff question and the question of taxing land values. The last is the most important and likely to hold first place in the contest. The campaigning will probably begin early in the year, and unless universal expectation is

disappointed, Bannerman's party will triumph. Chamberlain counts on electing enough members to hold the balance of power.

Chinese civilization.

If Ng Poon Chew, the managing editor of Chung Sai Yat Po, the Chinese daily paper of San Francisco, correctly describes the civilization of China, we Occidentals have nothing to be proud of in at least one respect. He describes China as having been for 45 centuries without a standing army, and as placing right above might in her moral philosophy. But she is about to fall to our level, where blood is priced above righteousness and the butcher is more honorable than the saint. She is organizing and equipping an army of 800,000 troops so as to kill the largest number of men in a given time with the least expense to herself, in order to achieve Occidental recognition as one of the great nations of the earth. A noble example is that which we have set the "inferior" peoples.

The postal deficit.

Postmaster General Cortelyou's report shows a postal expenditure for the fiscal year, of \$167,181,959 and receipts of \$152,826,585—leaving a deficit of \$14,572,584. But the report further shows that if there had been no deadhead matter there would have been a surplus of over \$5,000,000. So Mr. Cortelyou makes the recommendation urged by Mr. Wanamaker when he was postmaster general, that the franking privilege be abolished and each department pay for its own mail matter. This is a sensible recommendation. If the departments paid postage and the railroad graft were cut off, there would be no excuse for railing at the comparatively petty abuses of second class postal privileges. As to these privileges also, Mr. Cortelyou's recommendation is a good one. He proposes, instead of the second-class privilege or subsidy, a flat rate like that for merchandise.