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CURRENT TOPICS AND CASES.

Mr. Stead was fined £100, on July 1, for comments published in his journal concerning the Jabez Balfour case which is awaiting trial. The English newspapers are usually very guarded in their references to cases in which trials are pending, and any deviation from this prudent reserve is promptly punished by the courts. The freedom of comment and criticism which prevails in America may do serious injustice to the innocent, and often makes it difficult to secure an unprejudiced jury. The press, in its ardent investigation of criminal cases, is, no doubt, sincerely desirous of aiding in the punishment of crime, but there is a well-defined line which it should not pass.

A "society of comparative legislation" has been formed in England. The object is to promote knowledge of the course of legislation in different countries, more particularly in the several parts of Her Majesty's dominions and in the United States. The society will collect information as to the statute law and the forms and methods of legislation in the British Empire and the United States. Similar associations exist in France and other countries, and such a society would seem to have a special fitness in the British Empire, with its diversity of legal systems.