

# CURRENT TOPICS

IT IS REALLY becoming serious in the columns of the New York Evening Post when a reader of that newspaper writes the following: "If your news from Washington of July 10, that it is the belief at foreign embassies that the president is playing politics with the Japanese war scare, is true, the facts should be immediately investigated by patriotic leaders of both of the great political parties. And if this opinion is susceptible of satisfactory proof, then an impeachment proceeding should be instituted when congress meets. Roosevelt will cut his fingers if he doesn't look out."

HENRY WATTERSON'S secret is out. This story is told in a Washington dispatch to the New York World: "Governor John A. Johnson, of Minnesota, is the candidate to whom I referred as capable of carrying the democratic party to victory next year," said Henry Watterson, according to Colonel Charles A. Edwards, secretary of the democratic congressional committee, who returned today from Louisville. "I had a conference with 'Marse' Henry," Colonel Edwards said, "and he went over the ground at length. Colonel Watterson, you will remember, some time ago stated that at the proper time he would name a democrat living north of Mason and Dixon's line and west of the Alleghany mountains, who never has been beaten for public office, and who wears a mustache, and who, if nominated, could lead the democratic party to victory. Immediately guesses were made as to the identity of Colonel Watterson's man. Some one finally hit on Governor Johnson, but it was found that Johnson wears no mustache, and so he was dropped from the guessing. It became known later that Governor Johnson wore a mustache up to the time he became governor since which time he has gone clean shaven. Colonel Watterson asserted that Governor Johnson was the one democrat who was absolutely available, against whom no faction in the party entertains animosity, who has a record of carrying a strongly republican state twice, and who is at this time before the nation without a flaw of any sort."

IN THE MIDST of the heated term the Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier indulges in this bit of loving kindness: "The Wilmington Star thinks that the state democratic convention of Pennsylvania acted wisely in declining to pass a resolution naming William Jennings Bryan for the presidency in 1908, and declares that it is 'the plain duty of every state democratic convention that will be held during the next year to indorse no candidate for the presidency.' The Star would have delegates to the national convention untrammelled by instructions. We would go a step further and have them instructed against Mr. Bryan. His nomination would be fatal to the party, already more than half dead because it has followed his leadership. It would be of the greatest value to the party if the democrats of Nebraska should refuse to send Mr. Bryan as a delegate to the convention. If he had any real regard for the party which has sacrificed its dignity and independence and self-respect in his behalf, he would announce his retirement from the political field and give the party a chance to rebuild its broken fortunes. There appears to be, however, no deliverance from this body of death."

A WRITER IN Harper's Weekly says: "The regard in which the people of Minnesota hold Governor John A. Johnson is a rare combination of affection and respect. They honor him for his ability as a statesman, his integrity, and his success in forcing great interests to pay their fair share in the taxation of the state; they love him for the battle he has fought against bitter poverty and obscurity to achieve the highest position in the commonwealth. Those who know him best say he does not know how to flinch. In adversity he never whimpered and in prosperity he is unspoiled. It has been a hard battle, and you will find the marks of it in the deep lines around his eyes, the furrows in his brow, the rigidity of his jaws, the iron-like fixity of his determined mouth. And yet

it has not robbed him of his optimism, his cheerful readiness to believe the best of his fellow men. Every man carries in himself the open record of his deeds. In the aspect of this young governor one sees at a glance the history of years of grinding, patient, endless toil, of sacrifices gladly made, of hardships endured, of unchangeable resolve to fight the good fight to the end. He is long-armed and tall—a shade less than six feet in height—not of noticeable breadth of shoulder, but of whalebone fibre; a long, lean, hard, enduring man, the type that survives many perils and looks around for more. The first impression you get of him is one of inflexible determination. He neither courts nor avoids popularity. When he grips your hand he is not boiling over with enthusiasm, but is unaffectedly glad to meet you. His interest is not diplomatically effervescent, but moderate and sincere. You note at once, inevitably, the height and breadth of the forehead; then the full, eloquent eyes of hazel shot with blue, set well apart and alive with the spirit of keen inquiry, yet frank and unflinching; the heavy brows that frown with concentration; the long straight nose; the high cheek-bones, typical of the latter-day American, and the heavy jaws that terminate in a deep, out-jutting chin. Perhaps undue emphasis has been laid here upon the aspect of combativeness. That would be unjust to the subject of the article; for the first impression one receives upon meeting Governor Johnson is one of simple, genial kindness, a vivid realization of the descriptions of Lincoln's unaffected cordiality, and that first impression lasts all the time. He is the very antithesis to the politician playing to the galleries."

A BARTLETSVILLE, I. T., dispatch to the Little Rock Gazette follows: "William J. Bryan has written to William McKinley asking that his thanks be conveyed to Jeff Davis for the return of some underclothes. The letter reached Mr. McKinley here today and he thanked Davis tonight. The letter ends the shirt episode, which aroused comment throughout the country. Two weeks ago Mr. Bryan was a passenger coming to Bartlettsville on a Missouri, Kansas and Texas train. He left some underclothes in his berth, where they were later found by Jeff Davis, the Pullman conductor. The latter brought the commoner's wearing apparel to Bartlettsville that afternoon and turned them over to William McKinley, the station agent. In the evening Mr. McKinley sent them to Mr. Bryan's hotel. Today he received the following note from Mr. Bryan: 'Dear Mr. McKinley: I thank you for sending the underclothes and have noted with interest the names of the parties concerned. Please present my compliments and thanks to Jeff Davis. Yours truly, W. J. Bryan.'

THIS INTERESTING bit of political gossip is sent to the Cincinnati Enquirer by its New York correspondent: "It may seem mere 'mid-summer madness' to speak of the contemplated and even probable nomination of William R. Hearst by the democracy as the candidate of that party for the presidency. The improbable, the so-called mid-summer frenzy in the past has proved to be the certainty and the fact. It was the late Senator Ferry, of Connecticut, one of the great intellects of the federal senate of his day, who spoke of the report that the liberal republicans in 1872 might nominate Horace Greeley for the presidency, in the certainty that the nomination would be indorsed by the democracy, as 'mere mid-summer madness.' It may have been madness—the result of the election might prove that assertion—but it was a fact, after all. For it must be reported that among the democratic leaders in this state there are whisperings, which speedily may be louder utterances, telling of the organized work now under way for Mr. Hearst, and of the vindication in it of the methods which made his nomination for governor of New York by the democracy inevitable, and which has for its purpose the capture of the democratic nomination for the presidency. Mr. Hearst, they say, has the only organization. The democracy outside of his devoted following is poor. Its leadership is de-

moralized, and one indication of that is the manner in which Judge Parker harks back to the presidential election of 1904, almost as though the presidential canvass of that year had not ended but was continued to this time. Another reason given for the probability that an imposing demonstration will be made for Mr. Hearst at the democratic national convention is the now apparent decrease in the popularity of Colonel Bryan. He maintains his power to attract multitudes to hear and to see him, but the sentiment elsewhere, as so strikingly in this state, which controls these multitudes, is curiosity and tradition rather than any expectancy that Colonel Bryan will either be named, or, if named, will be chosen president."

A WASHINGTON city dispatch to the Sioux City (Ia.) Journal (republican) says: "The activity of General James S. Clarkson, formerly of Iowa, now surveyor of the port of New York, in behalf of the presidential boom of Secretary Cortelyou is an indication that, although Secretary Taft may be the administration's favorite son, President Roosevelt is by no means in an attitude of disapproval of the aspirations of Mr. Cortelyou. General Clarkson is a past master in the art of rounding up delegates. He is also a federal officeholder and he would hardly dare to get active in Mr. Cortelyou's interest if the president should disapprove. General Clarkson was appointed surveyor of the port of New York soon after President Roosevelt succeeded McKinley and began to think about landing the nomination in 1904. General Clarkson was of great aid to him then. Personally General Clarkson has long held a high opinion of Mr. Cortelyou as presidential timber, and should the political fates give the prize into his hands General Clarkson would have good ground for a claim of being 'the original Cortelyou man.' Within the last few weeks General Clarkson has made frequent trips to Washington for the purpose of conferences with Cortelyou."

A PECULIAR STORY is told by the Montgomery, Ala., correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat in this way: "Rena Rivers, who died a few days ago at one of the state prison mines, had served the state as a convict for nearly twenty years on a sentence that was for only twenty months. The clerk, when the papers were made out, made a mistake in calling the number years instead of months. She was only about twelve years of age, and was sent up from a poorly settled part of the state, where the court at that time was crudely administered. She was arraigned for larceny, and went through the trial and was given a sentence of less than two years. In a few days she was sent away to the mines, and there she remained until her death recalled who she was. The white man for whom her mother worked became interested in the case, and it occurred to him that the sentence was a long one for so small a crime, so he looked it up. He discovered the mistake, but too late to help the girl. However, her mother, who is now old and ill and needs help, has had a bill presented to the legislature to have the state pay for the difference in the time the daughter served and the time she should have served."

E. H. HARRIMAN, the railroad magnate who has had the administration by the ears for the past year, stands charged by the interstate commerce commission with a criminal offense punishable by a fine and imprisonment of not less than six months; with maintaining a gigantic combination in restraint of interstate and foreign commerce; with draining the resources of a prospective railroad, and with conducting his operations under what the commission characterizes as a method "of indefensible financing." The commission's report concerning Harriman's offenses are summarized by the Springfield (O.) News in this way: "The interstate commission's formal characterization of E. H. Harriman, the railroad magnate: His crime—Violation of act of June 20, 1874, in practicing discriminations in the management of the Cen-