

CURRENT TOPICS

THE TEMPER OF THE PEOPLE

Observers in Washington are noting the contrast there between the enthusiasm in behalf of war which showed itself at the outbreak of the conflict with Spain and the more serious temper in which war with Mexico is contemplated, says the Springfield Republican. Commenting further, it says:

"What is true in the national capital is in evidence throughout the country. The call for war at any cost is little heard these days among grown-up folks. The average citizen has not yet learned to hate the Mexicans enough to wish to kill them. On the other hand, the majority of people seem profoundly convinced of the extreme desirability of averting an actual and declared war with our neighbors, however troublesome and unreasonable they may have been or are. It seems astonishing, all things considered, that so few in this country have become-inflamed with a distorted notion of the glory of the battlefield to the extent that they forget the horrors of disease, mutilation and death always inseparable from active warfare. If there is any alternative short of bloody war, sensible people are praying that it may be found. The serious temper prevailing in our seat of government is vastly to be preferred to the jingo temper which has been so far confined to a few newspapers. The most welcome news that could come to the nation would be some turn of events by which the strain of a tense situation, so full of ugly possibilities, might be materially eased to the advantage of Mexico even more than the United States. This country does not desire war, but peace."

STANDING BY THE PRESIDENT

Those who do not regard it the honorable duty of this government to repeal the canal tolls clause, will have a hard time defending the exemption of American coastwise shipping on economic grounds, says the Dubuque (Ia.) Telegraph-Herald, commenting on the testimony of Professor S. S. Huebner of the University of Pennsylvania, a recent witness before the hearings of the senate committee. The Telegraph-Herald says:

"For two years Professor Huebner was employed as an expert by the house merchant marine committee, and data which he compiled was laid before the committee.

"Professor Huebner expressed no opinion on the repeal issue, confining himself to the economic discussion growing out of his statement that the house committee investigation had shown over 90 per cent of the coastwise ships on the Atlantic coast and 50 per cent of those on the Pacific coast were controlled by railroads or "conferences" of steamship companies, so far as rate making is concerned.

"Professor Huebner expressed belief that the tolls question would have little bearing on freight rates. Shipping conferences, he said, would charge 'all the traffic would bear,' and if tolls were remitted the ship owners, not consumers, would benefit.

"The profit from tolls exemption will go, as Professor Huebner has shown, into the pockets of the shipping combine, and shippers will derive no benefit whatever.

"If national honor and economic wisdom were not enough to justify repeal of free tolls, the final paragraph in the reasons advanced by Secretary Bryan for supporting the president's program ought to be conclusive. Said the secretary: 'The chief executive speaks for the nation in international affairs, and it is only fair to assume that he speaks advisedly when he declares that intercourse with other nations is seriously embarrassed by the free tolls law which he seeks to repeal.'

SUMMER SCHOOL SESSIONS

Characterizing the practice of closing the public schools during the summer months as "primitive and preposterous" and asserting that the most important problem of today was to "keep the boys from three months' contamination in the streets," P. P. Claxton, commissioner of the United States bureau of education, has recently

approved a plan which would mean continuous school sessions and through which 2,000,000 children might be enlisted in vocational work. A program for summer vocational work for public school work was submitted to Commissioner Claxton by Clyde Alison Mann, secretary of the American Society of Thrift. He approved the idea and expressed the idea that one vocational teacher in each school should be employed all the year. Further he says:

"These teachers should teach nature study and the principles of horticulture," Claxton said, "going from home to home, supervising the garden work and continuing work during the summer vacation.

"It is important to consider the fact that the public schools of the country represent an investment of nearly \$2,000,000,000, and that this investment stands idle about one-quarter of the time for no other reason than that in primitive days both teachers and pupils were needed on the farms three or four months in the summer.

"For school gardening, the equipment is a small item and the vacant lots of the city now idle, would be better for cultivation."

Commissioner Claxton points out that in Europe the public school last year produced \$700,000,000 through their vocational work. He estimated that probably 2,000,000 children could be enlisted in the United States for a few years and that their labors would yield them \$100,000,000 annually.

THE NATION'S MOST PRECIOUS PRODUCT

"The man who can think is for any nation its most precious product," says President David Starr Jordan of Leland Stanford university. Commenting on this, a writer in the New York Mail says:

"It sounds well, but do people accept that? Sometimes the fact is borne in upon us that the man who can think is about the most uncomfortable and disturbing product that any nation ever brought forth. He is a trouble-maker from the very start—and what nation wants trouble? What the nation wants is peace.

"But 'the man who can think' begins at 4 years of age to bother his parents with questions that they cannot answer. When he goes to school he makes trouble for his teachers with questions that they cannot answer. And so it goes. As a voter he disturbs caucuses and conventions. By and by he sets up a political school of his own—and the nation begins to want to poison him, as the Hellenic nation poisoned Socrates.

"We have had an awful lot of trouble with thinkers in this country—with men like William Lloyd Garrison, Owen Lovejoy, Horace Greeley, George William Curtis, Henry D. Lloyd and Louis Brandeis. They are always disturbing the calculations and arrangements of the politicians. The duty of the citizens is not to think, but to eat three meals a day and sleep nights.

"And as for the thinking woman—why, she must be suppressed with a firm masculine hand. She threatens the very foundation of society. Oh, yes; a woman should think, perhaps, but never continuously of one thing. Let her think of a thousand things in a minute and she is all right. The danger begins when she keeps to one track."

TOM JOHNSON'S ESTATE

Tom L. Johnson, who before he became mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, was reputed to be worth several million dollars, died leaving a total personal estate of \$41,483 and realty in New York state valued at \$90,881, according to a transfer tax appraisal filed recently in New York. The New York Herald says:

"Mr. Johnson died intestate April 10, 1911, and his widow, Mrs. Margaret J. Johnson; Martin E. Johnson, a son, and Elizabeth J. Mariana, a daughter, each receives one-third of the estate.

"Mr. Johnson held an interest of \$14,810 in stocks and bonds; commissions due him from the estate of Mrs. Helen L. Johnson, his mother, were worth \$1,274; from the same estate for money loaned \$8,264, and from the estate of Albert L. Johnson, his brother, was due \$9,100 for bonds which through an inadvertence had

become mixed with the brother's holdings, though belonging to Mr. Johnson.

"The total value of realty in New York state was \$212,136, the net value of \$90,881 being reached after deductions for debts and administration expenses. The realty consists of ten parcels in Brooklyn.

"Mr. Johnson's residence in Cleveland was in the name of his wife and was sold for \$195,000 the proceeds going to Mrs. Johnson. Subsequent to the death of Mr. Johnson securities and notes received as a part of the proceeds of the sale were placed in a deed of trust, the income therefrom to be paid to Mrs. Johnson during her life. The report did not indicate that Mr. Johnson possessed any property other than that mentioned in the appraisal."

PRAISES PRESIDENT WILSON'S STAND

Andrew D. White, former American ambassador to France, praises President Wilson for his stand in insisting upon the repeal of the section of the Panama canal act giving free tolls to American vessels. Mr. White was secretary of the embassy at London in 1898, and opened the negotiations for the repeal of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, which the Hay-Pauncefote pact supplanted. According to Mr. White, American diplomats who negotiated the Hay-Pauncefote treaty had no thought of exempting the United States when they agreed to the provision stipulating that "all nations" should use the Panama canal on equal terms. In a recent address before the George Washington university students at Washington, Mr. White said:

"Nobody not in touch with diplomatic affairs, could realize what a deplorable thing it was to know that this country was going back on its word. There never could be any doubt that the words 'all nations' included the United States. No one views with deeper humiliation the fact that we have no merchant marine. I would therefore do anything that could be done, with propriety, for the resuscitation of our merchant marine, but I do not believe in violating our pledged word."

A TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH FELS

Joseph Fels, world leader of the single taxers, is dead. During the later years of his life he became a convert to the single tax doctrine, and expended his wealth without stint to establish the philosophy of Henry George in nearly all the civilized countries of the globe. The following tribute from the pen of Herbert Quick, appeared in the Milwaukee Journal:

"A great soul has passed to the beyond—the soul of Joseph Fels. He was a Jew, but he belonged to the world.

"The Hebrew world has served humanity greatly and is giving us great men all the time. Its greatest gift has been its prophets. A prophet is one who sees clearly, truly, deeply, and not one who foretells the future. The prophets lift Israel above all other peoples.

"The spirit of Hebraic prophecy has been one of protest against injustice. Moses gave us the best land system ever put into law and until Henry George wrote, no better was proposed.

"Joseph Fels belongs to the great school of Hebrew prophets.

"'The land shall not be sold forever, saith the Lord, for the land is mine,' wrote Moses, and Fels lived to sow the world with this Mosaic truth. 'The earth hath He given to the children of men' did not mean to Fels some of the children of men. 'The earth belongs in usufruct to the living; and the dead have no right or power over it,' is Jefferson's way of putting it, and Joseph Fels delighted in the power his wealth gave him to preach this truth.

"I've made a lot of money—and it troubles me!' Within one minute of the time I set eyes on Joseph Fels he spoke these words to me. And his trouble about his wealth was not the trouble of conserving it or increasing it. He felt, though an employer whose liberality astonished other employers, he was still in debt to his work people.

"Behold, the hire of your laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept