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The choice of **CANAL ROUTES.** routes for the proposed isthmian canal has aroused considerable interest, both the Panama and the Nicaragua routes having warm advocates in and out of congress.

Passing into the Nicaragua canal at Greytown Harbor—which has filled with sand and is now unused even by small craft—a ship would traverse 46 miles of canal, passing through four locks, before entering the San Juan river which would be followed for 50 miles, then 70 miles of Lake Nicaragua, one-third of which would have to be deepened, then 17 miles of canal with four locks, which would introduce the vessel to an artificial harbor, and deep anchorage. The total length would be 185 miles; 63 canal, 50 river and 70 lake. The actual time consumed in crossing the isthmus through this route would be 33 hours, but, as large craft could not safely run at night, two or three days would be consumed in the journey.

The Panama route consists of 17 miles of canal at sea level, thence through Lake Bohio—which is to be artificially created by damming the Chagres river—for 13 miles, thence 19 miles to deep water in Panama Bay, making 49 miles in all to be traversed, with but four locks on the system. The time consumed would be less than 12 hours.

While a ship passing through the Nicaragua route would be nearer San Francisco, the Panama line is nearer New York than is the other.

These statements being accepted as facts, and the "David Harum" tactics of the commission having had the

effect of causing the Panama company to come to reasonable terms, there is now little question but that the Panama route will be found to be the more available, and preferable in every way.

Probably the commission had its own reasons for seeming to adopt the Nicaragua route, and the astonishing reduction in the price asked for the Panama company's holdings may be considered as the direct result of the commission's little flirtation with Nicaragua.

That the Panama route will be adopted in the end, is scarcely open to doubt, the present arguments and negotiations being simply evidences of the Yankee propensity to make a good "swap."

Washington's birthday recalls not only the noble character and steadfast patriotism of the father of our country; it also directs attention to the earnest loyalty of the common people, the loyal support they tendered to their leader and the gradual decline of unanimity among the people since that time.

Contrasting early-day history, when we were all common people acting under a common impulse, with the conditions today, with two great evenly-balanced factions which awkwardly manage to line up on opposite sides of every debatable issue, and in the absence of an issue manufacture one over which to debate, we are led to wonder whether or not the country is really progressing. May it not be that the republic is expanding in girth, but decaying at the heart?

Is the great world's power, with its armies in each hemisphere and its ships on every sea—both directed to suit the whim or serve the purpose of some politician or political faction—really as great, as sublime as the heroic people, who, prompted by a common impulse of pure patriotism, hurled their ragged battalions at the trained hordes of a mighty opponent, and gained a victory in which each citizen had his share?

There is no more profitable way in which to employ yourself on Washington's birthday, than in reading the history of our early patriots, and searching out and applying the morals contained therein.

The succession **GIGANTIC TOYS.** of mishaps to M. Santos Dumont and his air-craft, refute his claim that he has perfected a durable and dirigible machine for aerial navigation. Great in bulk, and puny in power, the machines so far have proved unmanageable, and unable to resist even a moderate wind, or an ordinary shower. Such a machine is far from practical; it is but a gigantic toy. With the prospective advance in the efficiency of propelling power, will come a proportionate improvement in these monsters of the air, but that a machine of their bulk can ever be made to obey the will of the operator, excepting under most favorable conditions, is more than doubtful.

That the air, like other elements, will eventually serve man, cannot be doubted, but it yet remains for some genius to invent a safe, reliable, compact, dirigible air-craft, and when it comes, neither the machine of today nor an improvement along the same lines will be regarded as a competitor of the really practical craft. Consequently money donated to M. Santos Dumont is not spent in the interest of science; it is merely expended to amuse the French with the sight of a great unmanageable machine ascending lazily to a considerable height and generally descending at an accelerated pace greatly to the discomfort of its reckless operator but to the entire satisfaction of the firm which builds the machines and rarely fails to get a fresh order after each trial.

Fasten a tariff **TARIFF TRUTHS.** upon imports, and a tariff will fasten itself upon exports. Protection is a system which charges a premium upon imports and deducts a discount from exports. Reciprocity and free trade are alike in theory, but the opposite in effect. An infant industry is a great manufacturing industry which proudly boasts of its ability to invade and control foreign markets, and sell goods in open competition anywhere on the globe—excepting in the United States. The 40 per cent tariff levied in 1828 was known for years as "the tariff of abomination;" the tariff of today, being estimated at about 57 per cent, is about 17 per cent more abominable. A merchant having goods to sell, seeks to be friendly with his customers, real and prospective; should not a producing nation display as much business acumen as does a country merchant?