

never designed to stand the weight of such long continued depression. Since in the end there can be no solution for unemployment which does not look toward fitting a man back into a job at the earliest opportunity—which in short is

not based upon the ability of society to provide a man an opportunity to earn his own living—all American plans for unemployment insurance should keep this remorselessly in view.

THE EDITORS.

Backstage in Washington

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THEODORE JOSLIN, the new member of the White House Secretariat, has inaugurated an experiment upon the personality of President Hoover which, besides arousing tremendous interest among the Washington press corps, may have a distinct political effect. The young Bostonian, we hear, is trying to break down the barrier of reserve which, consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Hoover has erected between himself and humanity. It is due largely to the newspaperman's efforts that the public has been regaled with stories of the transformation which has come over the President since his trip to Porto Rico. So far as we know, Mr. Joslin is the first member of the Secretariat to sense that "the Chief" needs to be humanized rather than deified, publicized rather than prayed over.

It is about time that somebody close to the President awakened to the fact that Mr. Hoover must be built up for the 1932 campaign. It may be too late to recapture the friendship and the admiration which the press men, and a good part of the public, felt for him when he entered the White House, but the attempt should be made.

Mr. Joslin is, we imagine, the man to make it, because, as a working correspondent until a few weeks ago, he knows the low esteem in which the whole White House establishment has been held by his former fellows. We do not mean to judge between Mr. Hoover and the group of men who are entrusted with reporting on his doings to the public; we simply recount what he has been cordially disliked, for quite definite reasons, by the White House writers and photographers. They have, with some exceptions, we know, missed few opportunities to insert unfavorable material in their articles against the Administration.

Childish as it may seem, certain of the photographers extended the feud to members of the President's family. Their zeal may have been due to the

enterprise which the camera men display in their work, but we are informed there was also a touch of mischievousness, if not malice, in their sport. We refer to the days when Mrs. Hoover began to ride horseback. Although the White House expressly issued an injunction against any pictures, several of the boys concealed themselves behind the White House shrubbery and shot the scene without any thought of the presidential prohibition. In fact, we understand they took care to make sure that the pictures

Hoover denounce their stories as "the most foul and unfair attacks ever perpetrated against the President of the United States." On another occasion they thought themselves entitled to disregard White House rules of secrecy, and they exposed his effort to deny that his handling of the famous Wickersham report made him out to be a dry. In short, the relations between press and President have been quite unsatisfactory to both parties. It has been, for the most part, war.

Mr. Joslin, of course, is aware of this situation. We have frequently heard him express dissatisfaction with Mr. Hoover's attitude. In his despatches to the *Boston Transcript* he sometimes let himself go in a proper and puritanical way, and placed his finger on the sore spots we mention. He knew, too, that his predecessor, George Akerson, was partly responsible for the misunderstanding. Mr. Akerson made little effort to serve as liaison man between the correspondents and "the Chief." He was much more interested in his new and gay life as a member of Washington society than in his job. He rarely knew the presidential plans or thoughts, and so he guessed at them. His guesses were usually erroneous, and the newspapermen, when blamed by their offices for their bad judgment, held Mr. Hoover responsible. Moreover, Mr. Akerson early grew discouraged over the possibility of humanizing his boss; he tried it for years without much success.

But the breezy Bostonian seems to have discovered the key to the President's character. It may be, too, that the approach of an election has softened Mr. Hoover.

Whatever the cause, Mr. Joslin

spends many minutes with the Chief Executive each morning—he gets to work much earlier than Mr. Akerson ever did—and he has fairly authoritative statements and news for the writing fellows at his 10 o'clock conference. If questions arise during the day, he is not afraid, as was his predecessor, to take them to Mr. Hoover for answer.

Mr. Joslin is also given the credit for several little stunts designed to make Mr. Hoover a less forbidding person. We understand he suggested that Bryan Untiedt, the boy hero of the Colorado blizzard disaster, be invited to the White House as a reward for his courage. It was he who dug up the intimate item



Marcus in The New York Times

"Just a-fishin'"

would be unflattering to the First Lady.

A small coterie of writers, with the apparent approval of their editors, deliberately set out to make life miserable for Mr. Hoover. They dedicated themselves to the discovery of news which would embarrass him, politically, and pain him, personally. They chuckled each time they were able to penetrate what appeared to them to be a certain spirit of smugness and satisfaction in Mr. Hoover. Several times, notably when they told how Marines built his Rapidan camp and of his son's connection with an airplane company which had obtained lucrative air mail contracts from the Post Office, they heard Mr.

that Mr. Hoover is less economical with telephone calls than was Calvin Coolidge. With an eye for what the press calls "human interest" stuff, Mr. Joslin

may yet win back "the good press" the President enjoyed when he was a mere Cabinet member. He certainly needs it.
A. F. C.

The Week in Business

►► Taxomania in Ad-Land

ACTING with their usual wisdom and foresight, legislators in several of our states are working for a tax on advertising. Running true to form, they have managed to come in at the psychological moment, launching the big idea when business needs advertising more than ever before.

Governor Huey P. Long (the big corn pone and pot-likker man) thinks that a tax of 15 per cent on newspaper advertising would be about right for Louisiana, but thus far he has failed. The Missouri idea is to place all newspapers and periodicals carrying paid advertising matter under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission. New York is also flirting with the possibility of classifying advertising as a public utility. North Carolina wants to impose a 2 per cent tax on the gross income of all newspapers.

Outdoor advertising is under fire in nearly half of the states. In some cases the agitation arose from a demand for regulation, but in the minds of many legislators there appears to be no clear distinction between regulation and taxation. New Jersey adopted, last year, a tax of three cents per square foot on all outdoor advertising, and many other states are now considering bills virtually identical with the New Jersey law.

Direct mail, we suppose, will be the next target. Then radio, and sponsored motion pictures, and so on. Altogether now, legislators! Let's give advertising a good sock! If we don't, it may revive business, and that would be just too bad!

►► Baekeland and Bakelite

BESIDE Charles R. Flint and Henry S. Dennison in our Business Hall of Fame we place a third figure, whose name is perhaps not so well known but whose chief invention, or discovery, is now used in every civilized country of the world.

The man—Leo Hendrik Baekeland, born in the ancient Flemish city of Ghent in 1863 but living the significant part of his life in the city of Yonkers, New York. His amazing product—Bakelite, used for distributor heads, self-starters and in a dozen other places on motor cars; for restaurant table tops,

billiard balls, fountain pens, beads, armatures, radio dials, insulators, switchboards, silent gears, umbrella handles and cigarette holders. The propeller which carried the Maitland-Heggenberger plane over the Pacific to Hawaii was made of a form of Bakelite material.

"Doc" Baekeland (Doctor of Science of the University of Ghent) made his first ten-strike in the field of photography. He invented a silver solution relatively insensitive to the yellow rays of the spectrum. In 1893, in partnership with Leonard Jacobi of Yonkers, he began to manufacture "Velox." The business prospered. George Eastman wanted the process, and bought it. Dr. Baekeland could have retired and played golf for the rest of his life, but he was not built that way.

Setting up a private laboratory in Yonkers he concentrated on his life hobby—the discovery of a synthetic resin for which the electrical world, seeking a new nonconductor, was waiting. After countless experiments and many failures, he combined formaldehyde and carbolic acid in an oven, using compressed air and 150 to 200 degrees centigrade of heat. The liquid changed magically to a transparent, beautiful solid, clear as amber but much stronger. Baekeland had produced Bakelite.

►► Vagaries—Series 17

CANDIDATES for the Department of Vagaries medal (guaranteed genuine

INDICES

(A two-minute summary)

Commodity Prices (Fisher's Index—1926=100)
April 2—75.3. (Crump's British Index—1926=100)
April 2—67.0.

Car Loadings (American Railway Assn.) Week ended March 21—741,942 cars (increase of 7,680 over preceding week; reduction of 133,443 under same week of 1930).

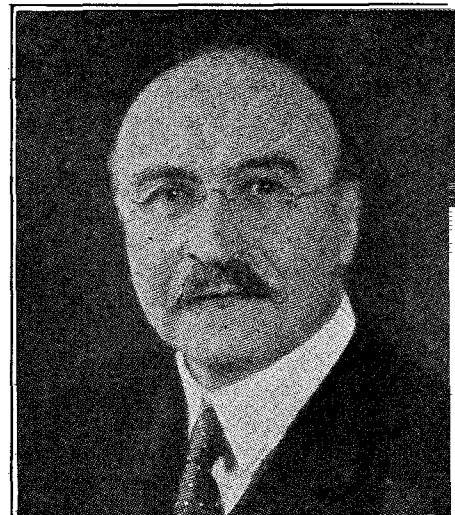
Steel Ingot Production Week ended March 28—55% of capacity (reduction of 2% under preceding week and of 20% under same week of 1930).

Crude Oil Production Week ended March 28—daily average gross 2,275,350 barrels (increase of 7,300 over preceding week; reduction of 238,850 under same week of 1930).

Grain Exports Week ended March 28—569,000 bushels (increase of 272,000 over preceding week and of 60,000 over same week of 1930).

Bank Clearings (as reported to Bradstreet's) Week ended April 2—\$9,941,335,000 (increase of 22.1% over preceding week; reduction of 24% under same week of 1930).

Failures (as reported to R. G. Dun & Co.) Week ended April 2—549 (reduction of 105 under preceding week; increase of 46 over same week of 1930).



DR. L. H. BAEKELAND

hand-tooled leather) who have registered their applications since the last departmental report include the following:

1. That Cornell University professor who will have all of us wearing wooden neckties, shirts, shorts and socks before the end of 1931.

2. That Parisian food distributor who is expanding sales of the Congopotato, which contributes a striking blunote to the dinner-table color scheme.

3. That young Canadian electrician whose ore-detecting device, equipped with tubes, batteries and coils like a radio receiving set, promises to turn mineral prospecting into an aeronaut joy ride.

4. That Jacksonville gentleman of color, yearning for yellow shoes, who used white paint to raise a dollar bill a ten-spot, but got into trouble because he placed the cipher on the wrong side of the 1.

5. That Georgia salesman who demonstrated a tear-gas weapon, shaped like a fountain pen, so successfully that he himself, as well as his prospective customers, had to make a running exercise in weeping.

6. That farmer boy, also a Georgian, who discovered that his mule enjoyed eating boiled cotton seed. The discovery has saved millions of dollars for the cotton planters, who find 27-cent cotton seed a fine substitute for \$1.50 corn, for stock-feeding purposes.

►► Big Little Book

ONE might plow through ponderous tomes on financial statement analysis and not have as much to show for it as he may get from the 77 pages of Spencer B. Meredith's *What the Figures Mean* (Financial Publishing Co., \$1.50).

The education of the investor was an important by-product of the Gre