

Philippine Islands independence as an appendix to the act of ratification.

Mr. Bryan has constantly and steadfastly advocated Philippine independence; and if the Democratic party is successful, by this candidate and by this platform it stands firmly pledged to proper measures to effect this independence without delay.

ERVING WINSLOW,
Secretary of the Anti-Imperialist League.

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LAND LAWS IN NEW ZEALAND.

Auckland, New Zealand, June 15.—Democrats and social reformers will be interested to know of the progress now being made in the direction of land value taxation in New Zealand.

Last year Sir Joseph Ward's government passed three bills dealing with land, land values and land value taxes. Putting the net results of the three bills together we find that considerable progress has been made.

In one bill there is an increase in the graduated land value tax.

In another bill there is set aside over eleven million acres (about two-thirds of the remaining crown lands) as an endowment, the revenue or rent of which is in future to be used by the government for education and old age pensions.

The Land bill provides numerous improvements in land tenure, one being that government land in future will not be leased for 999 years, but for thirty-three and sixty-six years only. Another provision is that wherever more than one application is received for one section of government land, the applicants who are already in possession of other land are disqualified, and the landless applicants ballot for the section amongst themselves.

GEORGE STEVENSON.

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AUSTRALIA.

Corowa, N. S. W., July 1.—The first session of the third Federal Parliament (p. 273) closed early in June. The principal acts passed were the Customs and Excise Act, the Surplus Revenue Act, and the Old Age Pensions Act.

The Tariff.

Though many of the duties proposed by the Government were reduced, the new tariff is considerably higher than that adopted in 1902. It is very uneven, some duties being very high.

Surplus Revenue Act.

The Federal Constitution provides that for the first ten years of federation, and afterwards until Parliament makes other arrangements, at least three-quarters of the revenue from customs and excise duties shall be paid over to the State governments. Hitherto the Federal government has spent less than a quarter of this revenue, and has handed all the rest to the States. The Surplus Revenue Act provides that the Commonwealth may retain a quarter of the revenue, even if it does not expend it all. Whether this is constitutional is doubtful.

Old Age Pensions.

The Old Age Pensions Act provides that from July 1, 1909, pensions will be paid to all persons who

have resided in the Commonwealth for 20 years, are over 65 years of age, and are in poor circumstances. The rate of payment is to be \$2.50 per week; and the total cost is estimated at \$9,000,000 per annum. At present the States of New South Wales and Victoria pay old age pensions.

State Rights.

The Federal High Court has recently decided some very important cases bearing on State rights. Last year the State government of New South Wales imported a quantity of rabbit proof wire netting, to be sold on easy terms to farmers, and a consignment of steel rails to be used on the State government railroads. As the Constitution forbids the Commonwealth to tax the States, the New South Wales government claimed that these goods were exempt from customs duties. Probably the framers of the Constitution intended that goods imported by a State government for its own use, as in the case of the rails, should not be liable to duty. But the States could of course nullify any tariff if they had the power to import goods duty free and sell them to the public. The court decided that in both cases the State government must pay duty, though it is generally considered that the judgment was based on a somewhat strained reading of the constitution, one of the judges going so far as to argue that a customs duty is not a tax.

In 1906 the Federal parliament raised the import duties on harvesting machinery, but at the same time it passed an Excise Act providing that locally built harvesters should be subject to an excise duty. Manufacturers who could show that they paid their employes "fair and reasonable wages" were to be entitled to exemption from the excise duty. A provision was also made that the price of harvesters was not to exceed a certain amount. This proved ineffective because it referred to cash sales only; the price of machines sold on credit was not limited. For a long time no claims for exemption from excise duty were made by the manufacturers, but the government did not attempt to collect the duty, though frequently urged to do so. Then the employes of several firms made an application to the Arbitration Court for increased wages, which were granted, thus proving that the previous rates were not "fair and reasonable" as defined in the Excise Act, and that the manufacturers were not entitled to exemption from the duty. The government then demanded payment of duty on all machines sold since the act came into force, but the manufacturers appealed to the High Court on the ground that the act was unconstitutional. The court has decided in favor of this appeal. The constitution provides that the Commonwealth government has no jurisdiction regarding industrial matters except in cases where disputes extend beyond the boundaries of any one State. The court ruled that the act constituted an attempt to use the powers of taxation by the Commonwealth to do something which the constitution forbids; namely, to interfere with matters reserved exclusively to the States. This decision destroys the "new protection" scheme (vol. x, p. 1062) of the labor party, of which the Excise Act was a forerunner. The labor party, which includes a number of free traders, assisted the government to pass the tariff on the understanding that an act embodying the "new protection" proposals should be passed

afterwards. As it turns out, the government (and the manufacturers) have obtained high duties without having to pay for them. This is the most important decision yet given by the High Court, and it is producing a great deal of discussion. The labor party are taken very much aback by it, and talk of attempting to amend the constitution. This decision may affect other laws such as the differential excise duty on sugar grown by white and by black labor. The Excise Act of 1906 is the law referred to by Miss Alice Henry in her Outlook article of last February (vol. x, p. 1124).

ERNEST BRAY.

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AN OCEAN VOYAGE.*

Liverpool, July 25.—A thoroughly delightful day was Sunday, the 19th, on the broad St. Lawrence and the gulf into which it pours. The sky a deep blue, with beautiful white clouds floating above the land-side horizon, and the wide expanse of water like a summer sea, made this voyage to England seem as simple almost as one to Albany on the Hudson. Indeed, there was much in it all to suggest a Hudson river trip. The stretch of water was vastly wider, with only the southern shore visible, and the mountains seemed smaller and more fantastic in outline; but looking southward one could easily imagine himself upon a North River day boat among the Catskills.

Late in the forenoon the pilot left at Father Point, and late in the afternoon the transfer of four "stowaways" from an incoming vessel lent occasion for excitement. They were good looking men all, and it did seem that better use could be made of their ambition to get into the new world. To be sure they had stolen a ride on one of Pierpont Morgan's boats, but there is worse stealing than stealing boat rides, and one could not but wish that they might have landed on our shores, instead of being transferred to an outgoing vessel for return to England before they had set eyes on anything but a mountainous fringe of the world of their adventurous hopes. The return of these men seems to be, in a measure at least, a result of the repressive immigration laws of Canada, copied in milder form from our own drastic ones. If the men had been carried to Montreal the ship would have been compelled to return them and to support them meanwhile, because they lacked the \$25 without which no foreigner can land in Canada. It is even harder to land in the United States. How suggestive it all is of the old parish pauper laws of England. The parishes were smaller than our nations, but the principle and motive of exclusion were the same. Moneyless men were not allowed then to cross parish boundaries; they are not allowed now to cross national boundaries. There is pretty much of a sameness about civilized barbarians in all time, only we moderns indulge it on a larger geographical scale, as becomes an age of big things.

During the night we passed Anticosti Island, the private property of a French confectioner; and at

noon of the 20th, with 384 miles to the credit of this low-lying yacht-like "Ottawa"—once a White Star greyhound, the "Germanic," and the swiftest in the Atlantic service,—we passed from the wide bulge of the Gulf of St. Lawrence on toward the straits of Belle Isle. There was no unsteadiness in the ship, nor so much as a white-cap to be seen across the smooth waters. The sight of two or three small icebergs in the distance and a spouting whale midway, divided interest with the "Indomitable" of the British navy, bearing the Prince of Wales to Quebec for her tri-centennial. We passed this royal fighting vessel toward nightfall, with the shores of Newfoundland visible far away to the south of us, and the snow-patched bluffs of Labrador near by to the north.

Labrador is owned by a company, as Anticosti is by an individual. The Dominion of Canada has given this company title to everything—rivers and forests, and minerals should any be found. No man can work there without this company's permission and on its terms. At present but little profitable use is made of the great estate. The rivers are reserved for gentlemen sports who like to fish for salmon, the forests are reserved until their timber shall be in greater demand, and the minerals are reserved until some one discovers them, if there are any to discover. There is little useful industry there at present, except the ocean fisheries and the production of whale oil and bone. But as industries develop in Labrador, as the forests come into demand for lumber, as minerals are discovered, this company of a few rich men are empowered to say to all mankind, "These blessings of God, you who believe in God, or these bounties of Nature if you know no God—all these, God's blessings or Nature's bounties as you choose to call them, are ours." What a joke it would be, if the social consequences were not so serious.

It is bed time of the 20th, and as we look to the north, a black shape with one brilliant eye tells us that we are passing to the south of Belle Isle and across the rays of Belle Isle light, out of the strait and into the ocean. In the imagery of the tourist folders, the "Ottawa" is now making her bow to the ocean. She seems over polite, for she keeps on bowing. And she bows more and more as Belle Isle light fades away and the Isle loses its outline in the darkening sky. We have left the sight of land.

Instead of rolling all night in the coffins we have for beds, and staggering in to breakfast, or to the ship's rail, or keeping our berths, as we had expected, we find ourselves on the 21st well refreshed with sleep undisturbed, and sailing upon a sea as smooth as a floor even if not quite so stable. And so it has continued throughout the day—as though we were headed for Benton Harbor on Lake Michigan in a calm—with a record of 390 miles from noon to noon, and a position far enough north to let the sun do his best for us in the way of a setting "stunt" as the day closes. Worth all the cold we had felt—the thermometer at 42—this sunset came as a fitting climax to a beautiful day. It was a bit of art in color which no human artist could rival.

We were in latitude 55 on the 22d, with cold weather and a slightly undulating sea; and on the 23d, with the same sea and a dull sky, we were almost in latitude 56. Another day carried us above

*This letter was delayed in transmission. In proper sequence it should have appeared between "Bound for the Sea," in *The Public* of July 31, and "From Liverpool to London," in *The Public* of August 14.