

ernment. On the 4th Mr. John Burns in a campaign speech summed up the situation as "London against monopoly." He called London "the last discovered gold mine"—"a place where gold could be got without digging, and silver without mining," "by introducing a bill into Parliament to give a few unscrupulous men, mainly not Londoners, the opportunity of exploiting this great city, and extracting from it a net profit of anything from one and two to ten millions a year in the supply of electricity in bulk." He also asserted that as results of the Council's labors epidemic diseases in London had been pulled down by 44 per cent., phthisis by 32 per cent., and the general death rate from 20 per cent. to 14 per cent. They had a cleaner river, a purer atmosphere, and London was not only the cleanest but the healthiest amongst all the great cities of the world. He could remember when the death rate in a part of London was 40 and even 50 per cent. Battersea had trebled its population and halved its death rate. Eighteen years ago London had forty parks and open spaces of 2,600 acres. It had now 110 parks of 5,000 acres. Since the trams had carried people to the parks the increase of games in 1906 had risen over those of 1905 by 47,000 cricket, tennis, and other games. The Tribune sums up the situation in saying that "a Moderate victory would mean much more than a halt. It would mean an unchecked career for all the private interests, whose ambition it is to capture for themselves the profits which municipal enterprise is securing for the common good."

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A Degree of Home Rule Proposed for Ireland.

Mr. Augustine Birrell, new Chief Secretary for Ireland, gave formal notice in the House of Commons on the 14th that a bill "to establish an Irish Council, and for other purposes connected therewith," would be introduced. This bill is to be brought forward in fulfilment of the pledge of the Liberals to the Nationalists to give Irish legislation a foremost place in the present session of Parliament. Dispatches state that the bill will provide for a Council in which the elective element will predominate. A number of nominative members are retained in order to placate the Liberals, who are opposed to an entirely representative body. It is understood also that this Council will have extensive administrative powers, but its right to legislate will be limited. This feature has been accepted by the Irish leaders.

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Sweden.

Stockholms-Tidningen for January 26 states that Mr. Vennersten, a prominent and wealthy manufacturer, and a member of the Swedish Riksdag, has introduced in the lower house of that body a bill providing for taxation of the unearned increment of land. The bill provides for such a tax only for the cities, and the taxes collected are proposed to be used only for municipal expenditures. But the bill does not exclude the idea of later extending this tax to the country, and then to make provision for the national government.

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The telegraph department of the Swedish government has issued a statement that from the first of

January this year the minimum fee for telegrams will be 6.75 cents for five words, with a charge of 1.35 cent for each additional word. The government owns and operates the telegraph lines between all important places in the country. The length of its lines is at present about 6,000 miles. The surplus derived from the operation of telegraph lines has varied between 15 and 18 per cent. of the total receipts during the years from 1896 to 1902. The system is not new or experimental, having been in operation for more than fifty years.

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France Working Out Her Separation Law.

Mr. Briand's "eighteen-year contracts," at first believed to be entirely satisfactory to the church authorities (p. 1090), met with objection from the Vatican, and have received modification. On the 19th the Chamber of Deputies sustained the Government's policy of adaptation by a vote of 389 to 88. In speaking for the policy Mr. Briand declared that the Government had not and would not abandon its conciliatory policy. The regime of the separation of church and state should not be made a cloak for religious persecution. "We stand for liberty for all."

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The United States and the Congo Problem.

Senator Lodge's Congo resolution (p. 871) was passed by the Senate in executive session on the 15th in much amended form. According to the press dispatches it has been changed to meet the objections of Senator Bacon and other Senators who felt that the United States ought to go slowly in its suggestions regarding European affairs. As the resolution was adopted it advises the President that he will receive the cordial support of the Senate in any steps he may deem it wise to take in co-operation with or in aid of any of the powers signatories of the Treaty of Berlin for the amelioration of the condition of the natives of the Congo Free State, provided such steps are not inconsistent with treaty or other international obligations.

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California's Japanese Question.

The questions of the segregation of Japanese school-children in San Francisco, and the admission of Japanese coolie labor into California (pp. 924, 1018, 1091), have obtained at least temporary settlement. After conferences between President Roosevelt and Mayor Schmitz and several members of the San Francisco Board of Education, an amendment to the immigration bill then before Congress was drafted by Secretary Root, relative to the admission of coolie labor. This amendment was accepted by the Senate and House conferees on the 13th. The conference report was adopted by the Senate, without roll call, on the 16th, and the bill passed the House on the 18th by a vote of 187 to 101. The amendment runs as follows:

That whenever the President shall be satisfied that passports issued by any foreign governments to its citizens to go to any country other than the United States or to any insular possession of the United States or to the canal zone are being used for the purpose of enabling the holders to come to the continental territory of the United States to the detriment of labor conditions therein, the President may refuse to permit such citizens of the