

greetings from officials and school children the presidential party, in eleven automobiles, crossed the Island by the military road to the capital, San Juan on the north coast, a distance of eighty miles, which was made in six and a half hours. San Juan furnished the greatest reception in its history. On the 22d the President went by train to Arecibo, also on the north shore, forty miles west of San Juan, and then returned by automobile to Ponce, embarking that evening on the Louisiana for Washington, where he arrived on the evening of the 26th. Everywhere in Porto Rico the President is reported as having been received with the greatest enthusiasm.

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In the British Parliament.

The education bill (p. 776) still occupies the center of the stage. It was reported on the 22nd that the amendments passed by the House of Lords had so incensed the Nonconformists (English Protestants who are not members of the State Church) that over a hundred Nonconformist members of Parliament had signed a memorial asking the government promptly to reject all the amendments of the Upper House. This would mean a deadlock and an inevitable struggle between the two Houses, which the moderates on both sides are anxious to avert. On the ground that it contained the spirit of home rule, the House of Lords on the 22nd, by a vote of 109 to 44, struck out the clause in the education bill empowering the establishment of a central education council for Wales. Discussion of the bill was closed in the Lords on the same evening, after having occupied fifteen days, or longer than any previous measure in that House. In its amended form the bill is wholly unacceptable to the government and the majority in the Commons, who contend that it has become frankly denominational, since it requires that unless religious instruction be given in them daily no schools will be recognized as public elementary schools. Strong efforts are being made to arrange some workable compromise. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who has been appealed to in the matter, admits that the bill in the shape in which it left the House of Lords, is unworkable.

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The government has under consideration a land tenure bill for the protection of agricultural tenants.

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Norway to Be Neutralized.

Dispatches from Berlin and St. Petersburg state that the new kingdom of Norway (p. 297) has sent a circular note to Germany, Great Britain, France and Russia, asking them to join in the neutralization of Norway. The neutralization would be in effect a guarantee against territorial aggression by any power, and would give Norway a status similar to that of Belgium and Switzerland. On account of its extended area, the possession of valuable deep water harbors on the Atlantic, and the agreement with Sweden against fortification in the neighborhood of the frontier, Norway is in a peculiarly exposed position, and the first efforts of Norse diplomacy have been directed toward eliminating the danger of being attacked, and securing facilities for the peaceful development of the country without

the crushing burden of a large army. Germany, France and Russia have already replied favorably to the request, and Great Britain is expected to join with them in the guarantee.

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Breaking up the Russian Communes.

The policy whereby the land-hungry Russian peasants were to be enabled to buy lands for themselves, inaugurated by the Czar's government last August (pp. 441, 511, 560, 634), has been supplemented by an imperial ukase promulgated on the 25th, under which the peasant may abandon his share of communal ownership of village land, and may become an individual freeholder. In communes where no redistribution has taken place for the last twenty-four years, a peasant may acquire as absolute individual property such portions of the communal land as happen at the present moment to be in his possession or under cultivation by him. In communes where there has been a redistribution within twenty-four years this privilege is limited, and is subject to pro rata calculation based on the number of members in the household. The ukase also permits the breaking up of whole communes by a two-thirds majority vote. The ukase is in the direct line of the Czar's whole agrarian policy, which aims at the separation of the peasant question from all other political agitation, and is a further effort to prove that the Czar can and will remedy the peasants' grievances without the aid of the Douma. The Liberal leader, Mr. Kovalevsky, has already protested against the government's dealing with the problem of land tenure without the co-operation of the Douma, and the Opposition press also charges that the government proposes to build up a party consisting of the wealthier peasant householders, who naturally will be quick to take advantage of an opportunity to acquire big lots of land at low prices. Mr. Kutler, formerly minister of agriculture, in an article in the *Rech*, asserts that under the ukase the wealthier peasants will acquire the larger pieces of land and gradually separating themselves from the poorer peasants, will form a valuable addition to the ranks of property holders. Such an outcome was forecasted with great precision at the inauguration of the policy, by no less a person than a cabinet minister (p. 441).

NEWS NOTES

—The "new football rules" are declared to have worked out well on the whole, and to have produced a shorter record of serious casualties.

—Another portion of the crater of Mt. Vesuvius has collapsed, again producing clouds of ashes, cinders and smoke, resembling an eruption (p. 777).

—J. W. Bengough, whose cartoons have long been familiar to readers of *The Public*, is a candidate for alderman in the third ward of Toronto, with every prospect of election in January.

—Mayor Schmitz of San Francisco, who is under indictment for extortion (p. 801), arrived from Europe at New York on the 23rd. He declared his innocence and his desire for the fullest investigation, charging the action against him to political motives.