

committee approve. The direct effect of its adoption will apparently be to effect a complete redistribution of the burden of rating. The indirect effect will be to stimulate buildings and improvements, to bring more building land into the market, to lower rents, and to diminish overcrowding. To what extent the burden of rating would be redistributed by the adoption of the new standard must, it is apparent, be a matter of conjecture, inasmuch as no reliable data exists from which to form a just estimate of the value of land in Scotland apart from the buildings and improvements upon it. It seems to the committee, therefore, to be absolutely essential before the proposed new standard is adopted that such a valuation be made.

The question to which prominent attention was directed in the evidence was, whether to make such a valuation is reasonably practicable. The committee adopted the view that a considerable expenditure of time and money will be incurred in making the valuation for the first time, but as the amount and character of the aid required would vary in different burghs, depending not only on the number and character of the returns, but also on the skill and experience of the assessor, they consider that the question of additional assistance ought to be left to the discretion of each local authority. Whilst placing on record the opinion that in making the valuation regard must be paid to every restriction validly imposed on the ground and legally binding at the date of the valuation, they say that it should not be forgotten that the restrictions usually found in the title deeds of the property in Scotland are such that, although they may sometimes diminish its selling value, nevertheless they materially conduce to the amenity of the district and to the health of the community. Such restrictions seldom benefit the owner, qua owner, although they may enhance the value of neighboring land, the valuation of which will be accordingly increased, and the rating correspondingly heightened. The committee, therefore, reject the view that restrictions validly imposed on land, even if they tend to diminish its selling value, should either be disregarded or separately valued, and a rate imposed in respect of this value on the person maintaining the restriction. Consequently if a valuation such as the committee recommend be made, regard should be paid to restrictions validly imposed upon the land. . . .

Proceeding to summarize their conclusions, the committee express the view that the new standard of rating, based upon the yearly value of land apart from the buildings and improvements upon it, is sound and would prove advantageous; that to set it up by estimating the value of land apart from buildings is practicable, that in making the valuation regard must be had to all restrictions validly imposed on the land and to recent expenditure in preparing it for use, that exemptions such as are proposed in the bill are proper, but that to these exemptions ought to be added railways, canals, docks, piers, and harbors; that so far as both occupiers and owners are concerned the new standard of rating should be substituted for the present standard, and that within the category of owners ought to be included the owners of feu-duties whensoever created. The committee therefore recommend that the bill referred to them be not proceeded with, that a measure be introduced making provision for a valuation of land in both burghs and counties of Scotland apart from the buildings and erections upon it, and that no assessment be determined upon until the amount of that valuation is known and considered.

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British Politics.

The education bill, the subject of ten months' debate, was finally killed in the House of Lords on the 19th, by a vote of 132 to 52, through the Lords' insistence upon retaining their amendments rejected by the Commons (p. 895). In a speech in

the Commons on the 20th, the Premier, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, repudiated the claims of the Peers to lecture the Commons, and stated that the government would withdraw the measure. Of the constitutional phase of the situation he said:

Is the general election and its results to go for nothing? It is intolerable that the second chamber, while one party is in power, shall be its willing servant, and when that party is emphatically condemned by the country it shall still be able to thwart and distort the policy which the electors approved. It may be necessary to submit for the moment, but neither the resources of the British constitution nor of the House of Commons are wholly exhausted yet. A way must and will be found whereby the will of the people, expressed through their elected representatives in the House of Commons, will be made to prevail.

According to the dispatches these declarations were received with prolonged cheering.

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Parliament was prorogued on the 21st for the holiday recess, to meet again February 2.

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James Bryce, Chief Secretary for Ireland, has been appointed Ambassador at Washington, to succeed Sir Mortimer Durand. Mr. Bryce, it is said, will come here as a commoner, and will be the first plain citizen to represent his country at Washington. Mr. Bryce is widely and favorably known in America as the author of "The Holy Roman Empire," and "The American Commonwealth."

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A Protest Against the Congo Horrors.

An open letter protesting against the conditions in the Congo Free State (pp. 871, 896) was addressed on the 25th, by a number of prominent citizens of New York, to the Secretary of State, Mr. Elihu Root. Among the signers of the letter were the Revs. Lyman Abbott, Henry Mottet, Wilford L. Robbins, George William Knox, Charles H. Parkhurst, John P. Peters, William R. Richards, Anson P. Atterbury and Percy S. Grant, and Messrs. William Jay Schiefelin, William H. Douglas, Charles A. Schieren, Spencer Trask, George Haven Putnam, Everett P. Wheeler, Robert C. Ogden, J. Pierpont Morgan, D. Willis James, R. Fulton Cutting, J. Cleveland Cady and W. J. Havemeyer. The portions of the letter given in the press were as follows:

Over a year has passed since the report of the Commissioners chosen by the chief Executive and virtual owner of the Congo to investigate conditions in that state was published. In spite of their natural desire to give all possible credit to their Sovereign, the Commissioners felt constrained to report the existence of measures and practices of flagrant inhumanity.

Among these measures and practices are the following:

1. The exaction of a labor tax so oppressive that many natives on whom it falls have little if any freedom.
2. Appropriation of land to such an extent that the natives are practically prisoners within their own territory.
3. The employment under authority of the government as sentries of cruel, brutish blacks, chosen from hostile tribes, who murder, pillage and attack the people for whose protection the government is avowedly established.
4. The abuse of the natives by white representatives of officially recognized companies.
5. The binding of little children to years of labor at