

**British Politics.**

The second resolution regarding the Lords' veto (p. 348) came to vote in the House of Commons on the 14th. Prior to the hour set for closing the debate, Mr. Asquith attempted to describe the course the Ministry would pursue should the House of Lords reject the proposed veto resolutions; but the Tory leader, Mr. Balfour, raised a point of order which the chairman of committee of the whole sustained. Mr. Asquith thereupon announced that he would make his statement on moving to adjourn. When the vote was taken in committee on the veto resolution, the resolution was adopted by 351 to 246. This was followed by the adoption by 334 to 236 of a resolution altering the duration of Parliaments from seven years to five.

+

Mr. Asquith now formally introduced in the House the Ministerial bill embodying the veto resolutions, following with the statement he had been prevented from making in committee of the whole. His statement is cabled in the news despatches as follows:

We are confronted by an exceptional, perhaps a unique case. The Government's effective existence depends upon the passing of the resolutions into law. If the House of Lords fails to accept or declines to consider our policy, the Government will feel it their duty to advise the Crown as to what steps are necessary to insure their policy receiving statutory effect. It would not be right for me to disclose the terms of that advice, but unless the Government find themselves in a position to give their policy statutory effect they will either resign office or recommend dissolution of Parliament. But in no case will they advise dissolution except under such conditions as would insure that in the new Parliament the judgment of the people as expressed at the elections would be carried into law.

The last sentence implies that pledges from the King to appoint enough new Lords to "swamp" the present Tory majority in the House of Lords will be demanded by the Ministry.

+

From the moment it appeared in the proceedings that the Irish members under Redmond's lead were cooperating with the Labors and the Liberals, the Tories were fierce in their denunciations, and with interruptions and offensive accusations and epithets they produced almost unprecedented disorder. Mr. Balfour in his Opposition speech charged a bargain through which the Irish had "agreed to swallow the Budget," in order to get home rule, and Mr. Asquith as having "bought the Irish vote at the price of the dignity of his office and its great traditions." Other Tories yelled across the chamber at the cheering Liberals: "Why don't you cheer Redmond, your master?" "Cheer the Irish victory!" "Cheer the dynamiters

and associates of Patrick Ford!" etc., while others shouted "Dynamitards!" at the Irish members.

+

Meanwhile Mr. Asquith had given notice of a resolution to be introduced on the 18th, providing for consideration of the Budget of 1909, all its legislative stages to be completed on April 27th; and on the 18th this resolution was adopted by a vote of 345 to 252. The Budget of 1909 was accordingly introduced by Lloyd George on the 19th.

+

The London correspondent of the New York World makes this lucid and probably correct summary of the situation:

There is little doubt that the Irish party will decide to vote for the Budget as an essential step in their support of the Government in its campaign against the Lords. It is the obvious policy of the Irish now to strengthen the hands of the Government in every possible way, and by carrying the rejected Budget by a handsome majority they will assist in discrediting the Lords. The King is said to be intensely worried by the dilemma in which he is now placed as the arbiter in the biggest Constitutional fight since the revolution of 1688. He recognizes that Balfour and Lansdowne, in taking the unprecedented step of rejecting the Budget, are the persons responsible. They forced the crisis even against his advice and rejected his suggestions for a compromise.

The surmise in this World dispatch to the effect that the Irish party will vote for the Budget, was confirmed on the 18th by Mr. Redmond. He announced the decision of the party to give cordial support to the Asquith ministry, including support of the Budget. Their reason as he stated it was that financial injustice to Ireland is only remediable by securing home rule, and the merits or demerits of the Budget are trivial in comparison with the abolition of the veto power of the House of Lords.

+ +

**Australian Politics.**

Meager news dispatches from Melbourne tell of an overwhelming defeat at the elections for members of the Commonwealth parliament (vol. xii, p. 678; vol. xiii, p. 148), of the fusion led by the Protectionist Liberal, Alfred Deakin. The Labor party was victorious. It is reported to have gained ten seats in the House of Representatives and probably six in the Senate, which furnishes it with a working majority in both Houses.

+

The Labor party had formed a Ministry in the Commonwealth parliament in November, 1908, having a plurality in the lower House but not a majority. The leading plank in its platform was a graduated tax on land values. Some six months later a fusion of the opposition parties was ef-