

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."

+ +

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.

+ +

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.

+

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.

+ +

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."

+ +

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.

+ +

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

country issuing such passports to enter the continental territory of the United States from such other country or from such insular possessions or from the canal zone.

The Chicago Tribune says that to understand the exclusion to be enforced by this amendment it should be understood that at the present time the Japanese government is refusing to give Japanese subjects passports to go directly from Japan to the United States. This is done on the general principle that there is not a sufficient opening for the Japanese in this country, and their home government therefore, as a police regulation, will not give them passports directly destined for the United States. But the Japanese government has been granting passports to Hawaii, Mexico, Canada, and many other countries. Once an emigrant from Japan has left his own country, he is outside the jurisdiction of his home government, and there is nothing to prevent his lying over a steamer and continuing on to the United States. This has been the course of the Japanese who have been pouring into California at the rate of a thousand a month. They have all left Japan with passports for Hawaii, have stopped in the islands a few days or weeks, and then have continued their migration to California or some other of the Pacific States. In addition to this effort at exclusion the President promises that when normal conditions have been restored and irritation in Japan has abated, he will take up with Japan the negotiation of a new commercial treaty entirely excluding Japanese unskilled and skilled labor.

✱

In return for this movement toward the exclusion of Japanese coolie labor from California, Mayor Schmitz and his educational coadjutors have promised the following amendments to their segregation order of October 11, 1906:

Section 1. Children of all alien races who speak the English language, in order to determine the proper grade in which they may be entitled to be enrolled, first must be examined as to their educational qualifications by the principal of the school.

Section 2. That no child of alien birth over the ages of 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 years shall be enrolled in any of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grades, respectively.

Section 3. If said alien children shall be found deficient in their ability to speak or deficient in the elements of the English language, or unable to attend the grades mentioned in section 2 by reason of the restrictions mentioned therein, such children shall be enrolled in special schools or in special classes established exclusively for such children.

✱ ✱

Constitution-Making in Oklahoma.

While the constitution of the new State of Oklahoma (p. 898) will confine the suffrage to male citizens, it will include provision for the initiative and referendum. The constitution clause follows the Oregon law, except that a petition of 15 per cent. of the voters is to be required; and in addition, the initiative and referendum have been reserved to districts, counties and municipalities for local purposes. The insertion of these provisions in the constitution was made a party question, the Democrats having been pledged to it in the campaign for delegates, and the Republican press and organization having opposed it to the end.

Legal Regulation of Railway Rates.

The example set a year ago by Ohio (vol. viii, p. 766) in fixing passenger fares at 2 cents a mile is being widely followed. According to a report of the Chicago Tribune of the 15th "the legislatures of West Virginia and Arkansas have sent 2 cent fare bills to the governors for their signatures. In Iowa, Indiana, Missouri, and Pennsylvania the 2 cent bill has passed one or the other of the two houses of the legislature. In only one State so far, South Dakota, has the 2 cent fare bill been definitely defeated. The movement is more general in its scope than the famous granger legislation of many decades ago, when many States of the middle West cut passenger fares to 3 cents a mile. Their right to do so was upheld by the United States Supreme Court after a bitter legal fight." Following is a summary of the status of the 2 cent fare legislation in the various States as reported by the Tribune:

Arkansas—Passed without giving the railroads a chance to present their side of the case.

Indiana—Senate bill making a passenger ticket rate of 2 cents per mile and 2½ cents when collected on trains passed House; final passage certain.

Iowa—Passed House on 12th; now before railroad committee of Senate.

Illinois—Bills pending before House; committees not yet reported.

Kansas—Bill pending in one branch of legislature.

Minnesota—Pending before the Senate committee on railroads; certain to pass.

Missouri—House and Senate both passed bills; now awaiting conference over amendments.

Nebraska—Bill drafted by joint House and Senate committee; both houses favorable to bill.

North Carolina—House passed 2 cent bill; Senate considering 2½ cent fare bill.

Ohio—Two cent fare bill passed in Spring of 1906.

Oklahoma—Two cent fare proviso will be included in the constitution if the plans of the constitutional convention carry.

Pennsylvania—House passed 2 cent bill on 14th; goes to Senate.

South Dakota—Bill defeated.

West Virginia—Two cent fare bill passed by both houses of legislature.

Wisconsin—Pending before the State railway commission. Decision not expected within the next two or three weeks; legislature waiting report.

Since the above compilation the State Railway Commission of Wisconsin has announced its decision, ordering railways to reduce passenger fares from 3 to 2½ cents a mile; the Nebraska Senate has passed the pending bill; the Missouri Senate has passed the amended bill; and the Mississippi Railway Commission has ordered the 2 cent rate to go into effect in 30 days.

✱ ✱

Organized Labor and Taxation.

At the meeting of the Boston Central Labor Union on the 17th, with nearly 600 delegates present, the following significant resolution was adopted unanimously:

That the Bureau of Statistics of Labor be requested to report on the existing methods of taxation in Massachusetts, with special reference to their effect on labor interests, and to recommend such reforms in the tax system of this State as may tend to ameliorate the condition of the laboring class.