

Commission Government in New Jersey.

Jersey City voted on the 18th on the question of adopting the commission form of municipal government, the enabling act for which became law by the signature of Governor Wilson last spring. The adoption by Jersey City was defeated by 13,068 to 11,585. As the act requires the polling of affirmative votes equal to 30 per cent of the vote for members of the lower house of the legislature, the plan would have been rejected even if the negative vote had been less than a majority; for the 30 per cent requirement necessitated a vote of 184 more than were cast in favor of acceptance. The Democratic machine worked against acceptance, but the Republican vote was generally in its favor. [See current volume, page 638.]

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The New Jersey plan is like that of Des Moines but with minor differences—five commissioners elected for four years, each subject to Recall once after being one year in office, and the Initiative and Referendum. Bayonne, Hoboken, New Brunswick and Jersey City have rejected the plan. Trenton and some of the smaller towns have adopted it. A fierce fight over it has been in progress for several weeks in Passaic, in which Senator Borah, John Z. White and Gov. Wilson have participated as speakers for adoption. The voting came off on the 25th.

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Revolution in Hayti.

Hayti is suffering revolution, with its President, Antoine Simon, on a sickbed. All towns in the north are in the hands of insurgents. Without any known resources to make such a decree effective, the government has served notice of a blockade on three ports in the hands of the revolutionists; but the American minister, H. W. Furniss, has informed President Simon that a "paper blockade" will not be recognized. American cruisers are being sent to the Haytian waters to protect American interests. [See current volume, page 206.]

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Exiled Shah of Persia Tries to Regain Throne.

Mohammed Ali Mirza, dethroned as Shah of Persia in July, 1909, and since then living in exile in Russia, suddenly made his appearance at a small Persian port on the Caspian Sea, near the Russian border, on the 18th. The ex-Shah had apparently made the journey to the Persian frontier without interference from the Russian government, though Russia undertook at the time of his dethronement to keep him under surveillance, and prevent his intriguing for return to Persia. The National Assembly has empowered the government to proclaim martial law of the most rigorous description, and is arranging an

expedition to cut off the approach of the exile. Mohammed Ali Mirza was reported on the 23rd to have reached Astrabad, where the people had declared in his favor, but opposition to him had developed among the Turkoman tribesmen upon whose support he had relied. The Bakhtiaris, the great fighting tribe of central Persia, were remaining loyal to the Constitution, and the chief of the tribe was being talked of for Premier of the country in place of the Premier, who had been asked to resign by the National Assembly on the ground of disloyalty. By his effort to regain the throne Mohammed Ali forfeits his pension of \$82,500 a year, and is to be proclaimed as an outlaw, with a price on his head. [See vol. xii, p. 1039; current volume, page 660.]

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The Controller Bay Scandal.

Congressional investigations of the records of the Interior Department with reference to the relations of President Taft, his brother Charles, and the Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate, are now in progress at Washington and dispatches of the 22d foretold a defensive message by President Taft to be sent to Congress on the 26th. [See current volume, page 654.]

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Those investigations, the defensive brunt of which have as yet been borne in behalf of the President by Walter L. Fisher as Ballinger's successor in the office of Secretary of the Interior, grew out of a report by Miss M. F. Abbott, a newspaper woman, which was circulated late in June or early in July by the Newspaper Enterprise Association, which has headquarters at Fifth avenue and Washington street, Chicago. That report was as follows:

In the official records of the Interior Department is a letter to Richard A. Ballinger dated New York, May 21, 1910, and signed by R. S. Ryan. The letter encloses another letter from Probst-Wetzler & Co., as "backers" of Ryan. With the letter is a postscript written on another piece of paper, but fastened to the two letters, which says: "He sent for me and asked me who it was I represented. I told him, according to our agreement, that I represented myself, but that didn't seem to satisfy him. So I sent for Charlie Taft and told him to tell his brother, the President, who it was I really represented. The President made no further objection to my claim." R. S. Ryan has long been known in Washington and Seattle as the Morgan-Guggenheim Alaska "man."

On May 15, 1910, six days before the "Charlie Taft" postscript was written, the Ballinger-Pinchot investigation had been thrown into the ditch by the testimony of Frederick M. Kerby and the production of confidential letters from George W. Perkins of J. P. Morgan & Co., concerning the exploitation of Alaska for railroad and mining purposes. When the letter was written and when Ryan called on President Taft the Ballinger-Pinchot hearing was still on.