

strike is unreported, beaten by Negro strike breakers, 1; Negro unionist beaten by parties unreported, 1; persons whose relation to strike is unreported, injured by private detectives, 4.

At a secret conference of the Employers' association held late at night on the 3d, it was unanimously voted, as reported by the Record-Herald of the 4th, that "military forces are indispensable for the protection of life and property."

#### Military Slaughter in Warsaw.

Several persons were killed by Russian troops in Warsaw, capital of Russian-Poland, on the 1st, in connection with a labor demonstration in the public streets. Several thousand workingmen, carrying a red flag, were parading, peaceably as it is reported, when their passage was blocked by a squadron of cavalry and battalions of infantry. The workingmen were ordered to turn back and disperse. In the resulting confusion, a stone thrown from the crowd hit an infantry soldier, and the next instant the troops fired into the crowd and the cavalry charged them. Later in the day a labor gathering was ordered by troops to disperse, and refusing was fired upon. About 60 men and women are reported as killed in the two encounters and 200 as wounded, but the number is really unknown. Angered by this slaughter, the workingmen on the following day called a general strike throughout Poland and Lithuania, and it is reported that every factory in Warsaw was immediately closed. A popular demonstration for the 5th, the 114th anniversary of the proclamation of Polish independence, has been called by the Socialists, the Nationalists and labor organizations, and further slaughter is expected.

#### Protection in Great Britain.

A somewhat different phase of the labor question was presented in the British House of Commons on the 2d in a debate over a Ministerial bill for the exclusion of "undesirable" aliens. Sir Charles Dilke opposed the bill with a hostile amendment, and was supported by Charles P. Trevelyan. The opposition to the bill proceeded along the lines of England's

traditional policy of offering a haven to the oppressed of every land. Mr. Balfour, the prime minister, defended it as a moderate measure for the prevention of excessive immigration; and Mr. Chamberlain defended it especially as an entering wedge for his protective policy (p. 39). He argued urgently that its purpose was to protect British workingmen from the competition of immigrants, and said he hoped to see the same idea advanced to the point of a bill preventing the goods of these people, as well as the people themselves, from coming into competition with British workingmen. The Dilke amendment was lost by 211 to 59.

#### British Land Value Taxation.

This debate had been preceded on the 14th of April by one on the subject of taxation with reference to a measure that had three times been before parliament and was now there for the fourth—the measure for the taxation of land irrespective of its improvements and on the basis of its selling value (vol. vii, pp. 12, 28, 618). As described by C. P. Trevelyan, who moved the second reading, the bill in question was the same in every important respect as the previous ones. Its main object was to make an assessment of the land values of towns and urban districts, and to place upon the local tax sheet a second column, which would consist of an assessment of 3 per cent on the selling value of the land. The bill had been urged with practical unanimity, Mr. Trevelyan explained, by the local authorities of the United Kingdom, no fewer than 166 municipalities, 152 urban district councils, and 128 poor-law authorities having passed resolutions in its favor. He did not argue that land reformers were inclined to regard the bill as all that was needed, but rather as the basis on which it was hoped that a thorough reform of the system of local taxation could stand. In describing the evil of the present system he attributed it to the fact that local taxes fall with excessive weight upon houses, improvements and enterprise,—nine-tenths of the local assessment being often made up of the value of buildings. This seemed, he said, "to bring us face to face with the real reason for

overcrowding in our cities." The bill proposes to do two things: first, to provide for an assessment of the land values of taxable premises, separately from the improvement values; and secondly, to tax the land, not, as at present, according to its actual annual income, but on its selling value. A hostile amendment, "that a satisfactory reform of the present system of local taxation must be arrived at, not by piecemeal and partial treatment, but by such legislation as will secure fair and equitable results to all classes of the community," offered in the landed interests, was defeated on division by 202 to 112, a majority of 90, and the second reading stage was ordered without division; but a motion to refer the bill to the standing committee on law, being opposed, stood over.

The parliamentary vote on land value taxation had been preceded only by two days by a conference of representatives of local taxing authorities of Great Britain, which met at Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on the 12th of April, for consideration of the same subject. Ex-Bailie Ferguson, J. P., of Glasgow, presided, and among those present were Mr. J. H. Whitley, M. P., and Mr. Trevelyan, M. P. It was resolved unanimously that the members of the conference pledge themselves, on behalf of their respective constituencies, to use every means in their power to secure the passing of the parliamentary bill for taxing land values.

#### Municipal Questions in the United States.

On the American side of the Atlantic, municipal questions relate less to taxation than to the ownership and regulation of public utilities. The municipality most disturbed by this subject at the moment is Philadelphia. This city originally owned and operated its own gas plant. By dubious methods its authorities were induced in 1897 to lease the plant to the United Gas Improvement company for 30 years, with the privilege of altering the lease at ten year periods. The rent was to be a certain percentage of the earnings, and has increased from \$200,000 for the first year, to \$650,000 for the seventh, which ended December 31, 1904. On the pre-

tense now that the city is bankrupt, it has been proposed (p. 59) to extend this lease for a long and fixed term in consideration of the payment of a lump sum, calculated on the basis of present earnings. At a City Council meeting on the 27th the sum was placed at \$25,000,000 and the term at 50 years from January 1, 1908. Violent popular opposition arose as soon as the nature of the proposed agreement was understood. It was calculated that at the present rate of rental the city would receive fully four times as much as the lump sum offered. A citizens' committee of seventy was organized to head off the plan, and one of its methods is to make a competitive bid in behalf of the people, the amount to be raised by public subscription. "No Gas Steal" buttons are appearing upon the streets, with a hangman's noose in the center and "We Mean It" as the legend. At a mass meeting called for the 3d a vigorous popular protest was made against the alleged steal. It is now believed that the new lease will not be given and that the present lease may be revoked for fraud and corruption in its inception. The nature of this corruption was revealed at the mass meeting. Robert Dornan, one of the best known manufacturers in the city, had sworn to an affidavit, there made public, to the effect that he and Thomas D. Stinson were members of a syndicate formed to bid against the United Gas Improvement Company in 1897; that the syndicate put in a better bid than the Improvement company; that Mr. Dornan, the president of the Improvement company, then sent for a member of the syndicate and the result was that its offer was withdrawn; and that in consideration of this courtesy each member of the syndicate received \$10,000 and got the privilege of subscribing to a large block of bonds much below their real value. Another sensation of the day was the break from his political machine by Mayor Weaver, who declared himself against the new gas lease.

In Cleveland the public utility at present uppermost in the public mind is the street car service. Mayor Johnson has proposed a basis of settlement regarding it,

the details of which we gave last week (p. 57), and which the franchise company has had under advisement. On the 1st, at a public meeting in the Mayor's office, the president of the company intimated that his company was indisposed to accept the proposition. We quote the important part of the Plain Dealer's report of this meeting:

"The whole object of this meeting is to suggest questions so that they may be discussed," said the Mayor in opening. "One may think of something that might not occur to another. All are invited to make suggestions. There are three principal questions to be worked out and discussed bearing on the question as to how much the street railway company should be paid. First, the physical value must be determined; second, the value of unexpired franchises; and third, how much in addition to the cost of reproduction and the value of the unexpired franchises should the city be willing to pay?" The Mayor then called upon Mr. Andrews, president of the company, for a statement.

"I will say in introduction, Mr. Mayor," said Mr. Andrews, "that at a meeting of our board of directors this morning the question was talked over in detail. The meeting was purely informal, though, and no action was taken. We will wait until a final proposition is made before we act." . . . We want to go on operating it. I do not believe there is a member of the board of directors willing to dispose of it."

The rest of the discussion related to values, and Mayor Johnson concluded by saying:

"I don't believe the people are going to present you, Mr. Andrews, with a franchise that is worth \$26,000,000 more than you have got now. I don't believe the street railroad company is going to get a renewal from this community. I am willing to make a liberal, fair settlement, and will go a long way in the matter of value of privileges, good will, etc., but I shall only advocate a final settlement even along this line upon knowing that the people are perfectly satisfied. I should want an expression of opinion from them and I think it could quickly and easily be secured."

While the Chicago traction question remains in abeyance, the gas and electric lighting questions affecting that city (p. 59) have been much in evidence before the legislature. On the 28th the municipal corporations committee of the lower house reported out a bill authorizing all localities to regulate the price of gas and electric

light, provided the rates are just and reasonable, and this bill was passed by the House on the 2d by 111 to 16. Also on the 28th the charter committee of the same house reported out a bill giving Chicago the right to sell to private customers surplus electricity generated at its municipal lighting plant. With amendments limiting such sales to electricity not needed to light streets, which is regarded as making the measure useless, this bill was passed in the House on the 3d by 95 to 21.

### NEWS NOTES

—King Edward of England began on the 29th a visit of ceremony to France.

—Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, of Virginia, died at Washington on the 28th, at the age of 68.

—Thomas Gahan, a Chicago Democrat of local prominence and national reputation, died on the 30th at the age of 58.

—A civil service bill for the State of Illinois was passed by the Senate on the 2d, having been previously passed by the House.

—On the 2d the Illinois Senate passed a House bill on divorce, which forbids remarriage by either party within a year.

—John Baird, the father of Mrs. William J. Bryan, died on the 3d, at Mr. Bryan's home near Lincoln, Neb., at the age of 82.

—The bill for a charter convention for Chicago, partly elective and partly appointive, passed the lower house of the Illinois legislature on the 28th by a vote of 100 to 0.

—The grand jury at Chicago on the 29th indicted Charles Dold, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, C. P. Shea, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and other prominent labor leaders, for conspiring to boycott.

—A legislative measure which became a law in Wisconsin upon receiving the Governor's signature on the 2d, makes it a crime to give, or for an agent or servant to receive, any gratuity to influence him with reference to his employer's business. The law relates to what is called "business graft" (vol. vii, p. 114).

—The Elsberg bill of the New York legislature, designed to divest the Board of Aldermen of New York City of all control over local franchises and vesting the sole power in the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, which now has that power subject to the approval of the Aldermen, was vetoed by Mayor McClellan, of New York, on the 28th.