

British parliamentary slang; that is to say, by giving power to the chairman in committee of the whole or "grand committee" to select some amendments for debate and to pass over others.

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The labor-insurance bill, known officially as the "national insurance bill," was agreed upon in substance and form on the 20th of October last between the Ministry and British friendly societies after a long period devoted by the Ministry to conferences with Labor and other interests. The bill has two parts. Its first part applies to sickness among workers with incomes of less than \$15 a week; its second to unemployment. As to sickness, the insurance fund is to be made up by contributions from employers, employes and Parliament on a graduated scale; as to unemployment, the fund (similarly made up) is to be paid out in benefits to unemployed workers. In advocating it with reference to Ireland, Richard McGhee, a Liberal member of Parliament from Ireland, made this reservation in a public speech at Lurgan last summer:

The great defect of the bill is the source which is made to provide the funds for the working of the measure. Every single penny of the contribution should have been paid by the state, and it should have been collected, not from the wages of the worker and the income of the employer, but from that fund created by the whole people and now pocketed by an idle and useless class. I mean "land values." Here would have been the proper source from which to have drawn supplies to finance the bill when it becomes law. Land values are the creation of the whole community, and they are more than enough to pay all taxation and to finance Lloyd George's bill as well. The contributions as now laid will fall upon industry, and will hamper it to some extent. Small as they are they will prove too much of a burden for some men to bear and to carry on their business, while, if they had been imposed on land values they would have encouraged and helped industry, and would have made both the employer and the workman more prosperous still; for it is the great merit of a tax on land values that it does not fall as a burden on any kind of industry, but brings fresh strength and fresh vigor to all industries. It would make an unemployment benefit absolutely unnecessary, for the best of all reasons, that it would completely abolish unemployment. It is not too late yet to take this wise step in the direction I have indicated, for under the great Budget of Lloyd George for 1909 and 1910 we are now having a complete valuation of land taken, and when it is completed we should set to work to have all taxation, as well as the contributions to the national health insurance fund, taken out of land rent.

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Explaining the bill at Whitefield's Tabernacle, London, as reported in the London Daily News of October 16, Lloyd George said that in his judgment it—

would do more to hinder or assuage human misery

than any bill passed since the abolition of the corn laws. The three principal causes of poverty and destitution in the homes of the industrial population were ill-health, unemployment, drink. This bill made for fifteen millions of men and women engaged in industrial occupations provision that would save multitudes from falling into ill-health and would diminish the pains and perils of sickness for many more. In addition, it made unemployment provision for two and a half million people. The great burden of sickness and poverty now falling upon the industrial population would be immensely mitigated under the bill, and in future the cost of half the burden would be borne by others. Incidentally the bill attacked the evils of drink, there being a provision in it whereby the organizations which had the control of the health provisions of the measure would have it among their duties to instruct the people on the evil effects of alcoholism.

He closed this speech with a response to the various interests that were urging delay in the progress of the bill through Parliament by saying:

Why are we to wait? Are we to tarry because the "Daily Mail" and the "Spectator" and Mr. Philip Snowden are in no particular hurry? This bill was promised three years ago. It has been on the table six months, discussed, advertised in every paper. I have not yet received a single practical suggestion from either of the three. No. We will have it through. We want to get on with other work. This is not the end of social business. It is a good beginning. It is in some of its provisions a great palliative until we can get deeper. I never said that this will do everything. It will help. And then we will go on. I am taunted that I have promised a new heaven and a new earth. They seem to think that phrase was uttered by me. I am a humble believer in it. I should like to be able in a humble way to help its advent—a new earth where the health of the multitude will be more precious in the eyes of the law than the wealth of the few; a new earth where the superabundance with which Providence blesses labor shall be directed and controlled so that the home of the laborer shall be saved from wretchedness, penury, poverty, and privation; a new earth where the best of all shall be concentrated and organized to avert the worst from each.

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Republican Advance in China.

The Republicans, as the Chinese revolutionists desire to be called, after a drastic siege of Nanking, accompanied by careful tactical fighting, took the city last week. The difficulties were great for Nanking is strongly fortified. The wall at various places is ninety feet high, built of solid masonry and thirty feet thick. The four main gates are at the principal points of the compass. Tai Ping Men, the north gate, and Chao Yang Men, the east gate, are commanded by Purple Hill, which is fortified and overlooks the entire city. Tiger Fort lies outside the wall, while Lion Fort, inside the wall, commands the river and is well fortified. Tiger Fort likewise is well fortified and equipped. Tiger

Fort and Purple hill were carried successively. At noon on the 2nd three of the city gates were forced simultaneously. The Imperialists were already in parley, and the bloodshed of the act of occupation was slight. Subsequently the Manchu quarter of the city was looted and burned, according to the dispatches. The rest of the city quickly resumed business under the police patrol of the Republicans. On the 3rd the city of Urga, the capital of Mongolia, was reported to have declared its independence of the Chinese Empire, and to have expelled the Imperial officials. The revolution is also making headway in Manchuria, where it is receiving assistance from the Japanese. [See current volume, page 1219.]

Persia Facing a Crisis.

The ancient kingdom of Persia, situated in the western part of Asia, south of the Caspian Sea, west of Afghanistan, east of Asiatic Turkey, and north of the Persian Gulf, has been advancing during the past six years out of autocracy into constitutionalism. The Shah Muhammed Ali was forced to abdicate in 1907, and his young son Ahmed was put on the throne under a regency. Although claiming independent nationality, Persia has been obliged in recent years to submit to the extension of spheres of influence over her northern provinces by Russia, and over her southern provinces by England. These spheres were delimited by an agreement between Russia and England, ratified in August, 1907; but the agreement between these two European nations included an assertion of the possible necessity of financial control of the Persian revenues. In order to avoid further European control, and fearing the complications of European diplomacy, the Persian National Assembly early in the present year turned to the United States for assistance in getting its finances on a stable footing. It may be remembered that, aided informally by the United States Government, arrangements were made with a small group of American financial experts who sailed for Persia in April, and that on their arrival one of their number, Wm. Morgan Shuster, was put in charge of the national finance with the title of Treasurer-General. Since that time the ex-Shah, with the scarcely concealed assistance of the Russian Government, has tried vainly to establish himself upon the throne. With the failure of that project Russia protested against certain confiscations ordered by the Assembly and carried out by Mr. Shuster; also against some of his appointments. Russian troops were started into Persia, and it was reported last week that Persia had yielded and made apologies, in the face of so threatening a situation. [See current volume, pages 351, 585, 1004, 1173, 1219.]

The report of the submission of Persia now ap-

pears to have been an error. The Russian ultimatum called for the immediate dismissal of Mr. Shuster, and demanded a cash indemnity for the dispatch of Russian troops to Persia. Mr. Shuster begged the National Assembly to consult only the interests of the country, and not to consider him. The National Assembly, however, rejected the ultimatum by a large majority. The Russians have thereupon proceeded on their way toward Teheran. An appeal to Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary, by the Persian minister at London, drew out only the advice that Persia should comply with the Russian terms. In the terror of the moment several prominent reactionary Persians have been assassinated. The populace at Teheran approves the attitude of the Assembly, and messages from the provinces pledge unlimited support to the Government. A general boycott on Russian goods has been started, and people are hindering the use of the Russian tramway. Placards are posted on the walls in Teheran, proclaiming "Death or Independence," and 10,000 persons marched through the streets on the 3d under such banners. On the 4th the National Assembly telegraphed an appeal for aid to the American Congress and to the other national parliaments of the world. Turkey was reported on the 4th to be marching troops toward the northwest Persian frontier, desiring, according to the dispatch, to share in the partition of Persia, if that day is at hand. But another report of the same date announced that Turkey has appealed to the Powers asking that the independence of Persia be respected.

The English Liberal press is divided on the situation. The Daily Telegraph, acknowledges and takes the consequences of the Russian partnership, saying: "By the terms of our agreement with Russia we are bound to take into consideration the wishes of our partner, even though she seems to have acted with peremptory harshness." While the Daily News declares that Russia's advance means a partition that will enable Russia, whenever she be so inclined, to fight a battle for India on the plains of Persia. The United States Government, according to the news reports of the 2nd, has sent instructions to the American minister at Teheran, to see to it that Mr. Shuster's person and property and liberty are protected in his official capacity, and if he suffers in that matter through the breaking of his contract of employment by the Persian government, even though that government is under duress from Russia, he must look to Persia for indemnification. Mr. Shuster's own statement of the situation, sent to the American press under date of November 30, is as follows:

Russia's demand for my dismissal is really actuated by my refusal officially to recognize her so-