

cratic motion (invited by the Speaker) to declare the Speakership vacant was then defeated.

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The adoption of the Norris resolution, by taking from the Speaker the powers of concentrated control over the House of Representatives which he exercised under the old rules, makes him simply the presiding officer of that body.

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#### The British Parliament.

Pursuant to the program agreed upon by the House of Commons on the 28th (p. 254) this House will adjourn on the 23d, over the Easter holidays, and its sessions will be resumed on the 29th, when the movement to curb the power of the House of Lords will proceed. Meanwhile, Mr. Asquith, the prime minister, has given formal notice of the veto resolutions the Ministry have agreed upon. He did this in the House of Commons on the 21st. As reported by cable the proposed resolutions, three in number, are in substance as follows:

The first declares it is expedient that the House of Lords be disabled by law from rejecting or amending a money bill.

The second declares that it is expedient that the powers of the House of Lords over bills other than money bills be restricted by law, so that any such bill which has passed the House of Commons in three successive sessions and has been rejected by the House of Lords in each of these sessions shall become a law without the consent of the House of Lords, on Royal assent being declared, provided that at least two years have elapsed between the date of the first introduction of the bill in the Commons and the date it passes the Commons for the third time.

The third proposes to limit the duration of each Parliament to five years.

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In the House of Lords the Rosebery resolutions for reforming that House from within (p. 254) were adopted in part by that House on the 21st. The first two resolutions, declaring that a strong and efficient second chamber is not merely an integral part of the British constitution, but is necessary to the well being of the state and the balance of Parliament, and that a second chamber can best be had by reconstituting the House of Lords, was unanimously adopted; but the third renouncing the hereditary principle went over. It was passed on the 22nd by 175 to 17.

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#### The French Ministry Tides Over Its Crisis.

The French Premier, Mr. Briand, has met the scandal of the exposure of vast graft in the liquidation of the church property for the Republic (p. 254), with a pluck that has brought a popular vindication. In a powerful speech in the Chamber

of Deputies on the 15th he made no attempt to plead extenuating circumstances for what had happened; but contended that the government was not responsible for individual breaches of trust in the great work of the separation of the church and the state, which, he said, "had freed the country from ties which tomorrow other countries will be obliged to sever." The Chamber adopted a resolution by 343 votes to 79, condemning in the severest terms the manner in which the liquidations were executed, but expressing confidence in the government's promise to fix the responsibility and punish the guilty, whoever they may be found to be. On the 17th the Senate adopted a similar resolution by a vote of 261 to 13.

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#### Alsace-Lorraine Desires Statehood in the German Empire.

The provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, ceded by France to the German Empire in 1871, at the close of the Franco-Prussian war, have since been governed as the "Reichsland," or Imperial Land, of Alsace-Lorraine, under laws voted by the Reichstag, or Imperial Parliament, administered by a Governor-General bearing the title of "Statthalter." The double province now desires the standing of a Federated State, like the other States of the Empire; and on the 15th the Reichstag, by a narrow margin, adopted a resolution presented by Mr. Preiss, an Alsatian member, asking for such Statehood. Dr. Gregoire, another Alsatian member, offered an amendment, which was adopted, providing that in the event of an Alsatian parliament being formed, its members should be elected by universal, equal, direct secret ballot.

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#### The Prussian Suffrage Bill Is Passed.

The Government's suffrage bill (p. 254) was passed by the Prussian Diet on the 16th, without essential changes, by a vote of 238 to 188. The bill substitutes direct for indirect suffrage, the old system having been for groups of 150 electors to elect delegates, who in turn elected the members of the Diet. In other respects the bill fails entirely to meet the desires, not only of the Socialists, but of all radical and progressive groups, including the "intellectuals," as the professional classes are called. The Government refused to include secret balloting in the new measure, which also provides for the retention of the three-class electoral system, whereby the electors are divided according to the amount of taxes they pay, but officers, officials and other members of the educated classes are placed in the first or second class, irrespective of the amount of their taxes. The majority for the measure in the Diet was composed of the Conservative and Free Conservative parties, only two members of which refused their support. The minority was made up of the National Liber-